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**"THE FUNCTION OF THE 'SPIRIT OF YAHWEH/ GOD' IN SOME EARLY
NARRATIVES OF THE HEBREW BIBLE"**

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ABSTRACT

Yahweh's spirit functions to further his purpose for Israel and the fulfilment of his promise to them of the land. To this end the spirit appears often and mercifully as the agent of blessing and deliverance for both individual and Israel; on a military level often initiating the process that leads to victory and re-possession of the land. The spirit often functions simultaneously as the agent of judgement with respect to Israel's enemies, sometimes creating in the spirit-possessed an anger reflecting the divine indignation. While individuals [Moses, (Samuel and the prophets?)], appear to be bearers of the spirit, it comes upon those designated by Yahweh for leadership roles primarily as a personal and/ or public legitimating sign of their new status. Those whose legitimation involves them in prophesying do so only temporarily as an indication of their new status as servants of Yahweh in the area of (civil) leadership (and not prophecy). The spirit can also function as a delegitimizing sign, marking rejection by Yahweh. The spirit seems to remain with those endowed, mediating to them the divine presence, also equipping and enabling them to fulfil their new role(s). It can also be regarded as a token of Yahweh's contractual commitment to his chosen king who becomes sacrosanct as a result of the endowment. The spirit can equally well function to disable and strip of office the unworthy and rejected leader whose contract Yahweh has revoked. The spirit is communicated sometimes at a cultic centre in the presence of a human mediator but sometimes without human mediation and away from any such centre. There is no indication of an ethical aspect to the spirit endowment, which is still restricted to a small group of leaders and prophets, although the hope is expressed that this possession might yet be universal, at least within Israel. The evil spirit is not to be identified with the more powerful spirit of Yahweh, but, nevertheless functions under Yahweh's control, contributing to the unfolding of his purposes for Israel. In particular, [like the wind of Numbers 11] it functions as an agent of divine judgement or retribution against Israel's internal enemies.

For Annice

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PREFACE

The purpose of the present study is to consider the function of the 'spirit of Yahweh/ God' in some of the early narratives of the Hebrew Bible.

Initially, my intention was to consider the texts which involved those chosen for a position of leadership within the community, my concerns being to discover:

(i) the way in which the spirit was communicated to these individuals;

(ii) the effect the spirit had on them;

(iii) the purpose of the spirit endowment: whether it was authenticating, empowering or otherwise;

(iv) whether their spirit-endowment was fleeting or permanent; and

(v) whether it was a one-off experience or repeatable.

In the course of my study, however, I began to appreciate that at least some of the spirit texts seemed to have a significant function at an altogether different level, in terms of the theme or thrust of the larger narrative of which they formed part. And so I have also sought to investigate whether such a function exists in each of the texts considered. [Indeed, this has affected, to some degree, my choice of passages for consideration, leading me to leave aside texts where any mention of the spirit seemed merely incidental to the wider narrative].

The study has also produced one further offshoot not anticipated initially, namely, a consideration of the role played by the 'evil spirit' in the narratives under

scrutiny. We shall investigate the significance of this 'evil spirit' and also what relationship, if any, exists between it and the 'spirit of Yahweh' in these narratives.

In the present study, I have chosen to concentrate on three main passages: Numbers 11-12; Judges 2-16; and 1 Samuel 9-19.

The study is concerned primarily with the final form of the text, although cognisance is taken of the often complex traditions which would appear to underlie the text.

This is an opportunity to express my gratitude to the Senate of my Alma Mater, the University of Glasgow, for the privilege of studying once again in its environs. In particular, my thanks are due to the staff of the Faculty of Divinity and of the University Library for their unfailing helpfulness. Above all my gratitude is due to my supervisor, the Revd. Alasdair G. Hunter for guiding my thesis particularly in the earlier stages of its development; for numerous helpful comments and suggestions, many of which have been incorporated into the final product; and for keeping me at it. /e

Most of all I should like to express my heartfelt gratitude to my wife Annice to whom this thesis is lovingly dedicated. She has not only borne patiently the privations my extra studies have imposed on her, but has also coped admirably with moving to a new home and charge, and with the addition of our third child, Cailean - all in the space of the past few years.

CHAPTER ONE

NUMBERS 11-12

Introduction

We begin our study with a consideration of Numbers 11-12, a passage in which the spirit (rwḥ) of Yahweh /1/, already upon Moses /2/, was shared among seventy elders chosen to be co-burden-bearers with Moses. This sharing of the spirit resulted in an immediate, though temporary, demonstration of prophesying on the part of the seventy.

We consider this passage, firstly because it contains the first extended account in the Hebrew Bible of the spirit of God actually coming upon individuals /3/; secondly, because of the reference to prophesying (vv 25,26), a term which we will meet again at a later point in our study in connection with Saul's experience of the spirit of God (cf 1 Sam 10:11; 19:24); and, thirdly, because, the remaining passages to be considered being all from the Deuteronomistic History, it was felt that a passage from another section of the Hebrew Bible might prove a useful point of comparison, particularly since there would appear to be "no overwhelming evidence of deuteronomistic influence" in the passage under consideration (so, Budd, 125).

Methodology

The book of Numbers has been regarded generally as the least unified composition within the Pentateuch and as giving the least evidence of independent integrity of any of its books (cf Childs, 1979:192, 129). Indeed, many commentators have despaired of discerning any significant pattern in its construction (e.g., Noth, 1968:11). G.B. Gray (xxiv) goes so far as to describe it as having been "mechanically cut out of the whole of which it forms a part", and thus as possessing "no unity of subject".

However, some more recent scholars and commentators [e.g., Clines (53-57; 85-87), Childs (1979:194-199), Budd (xvii-xxi) and Wenham (14-17)] have presented a more positive attitude to the unity of the Numbers material and, to a greater or lesser extent, regard it as having its own individual character and function as an integrated unit within the larger work of the Pentateuch. This I believe has been adequately demonstrated by the above scholars, et al, and so, in this study, I intend to regard the Book of Numbers as a structured entity in which elements are shaped to contribute to the integrity and significance of the whole.

As already mentioned in the preface, our study is concerned particularly with the final form of the text.

Exposition

Chapter 11, with which we are particularly concerned, belongs to the second major section of Numbers, which most commentators regard as beginning at 10:11, where there is a precise date formula, similar to that found in 1:1 and indicating a new section of material. However, in order to consider its position and significance within the whole of Numbers it will be necessary for us initially to look briefly at the first section, 1:1-10:10.

Throughout this section, though the materials are very diverse and not generally recognised to follow any organising principle, certain main emphases do recur.

There is, firstly, a strong emphasis on **Israel's preparation for the journey to the land of promise**. This preparation is made in 'the wilderness of Sinai' (1:1), but it is clear that Sinai was only a stage along the route of a journey which actually began with the exodus from Egypt (cf 9:1; 15:41; etc). From the beginning, then, the direction of their movement has been away from the land of Egypt.

The goal of the journey is not identified specifically in this section, though reference is made to it in 10:9 ('your land'), and in 9:14 ('native of the land'; RSV 'native') - both texts anticipating the period of the settlement.

The renewed movement of Israel towards this goal actually begins in 10:11 and is, as Clines (53-57) points out, one of the distinctive features of Numbers. Meanwhile, in this section, the preparations for the march continue apace as is clear from the very frequent use of ns^c ('set out') (cf 1:51; 2:9, 16, 17 (x2), 24, 31, 34; 4:5, 15; 9:17, 18, 19, 20, 21 (x2), 22 (x2), 23; 10:5, 6). We might also note, for example, the instructions given to the Levites for the care of the Tent of Meeting (1:47-53); the censuses taken of the Levites (chapters 3-4; particularly that in ch 4); and, the rules for the disposition of the camp in relation to the Tent of Meeting (ch 2) - all of which are concerned with matters of transportation.

Even chapters 7-9, whose events are chronologically prior to those of the first six chapters /4/ begin and end, as Clines (54) points out, on notes that keep the matter of movement towards the land in the forefront of attention: in 7:1-8 the gifts of wagons and oxen are to be the means of transportation of the ark; while in 9:15ff an elaborate account is introduced proleptically to depict how the cloud functions during the movement of the camp. Again, significantly, the final items of tabernacle-related furniture mentioned here are the silver trumpets, which will serve as signals for 'breaking camp' (ns^c). "Even in these early chapters, movement away from Sinai towards the land accounts for almost all its material" (so, Clines, 54).

A second major emphasis in this section is on **the military nature of the journey** to be undertaken. In 1:2ff Moses is required to take a census of all the fighting men (cf 1:20, 22, 24, 26, 28, etc; also 10:9), in preparation, it would appear, for a military campaign. It is understood from the

beginning that the land that is promised will nonetheless have to be fought for (cf 10:9).

We might also note that the unique and, as yet, **unchallenged leadership of Moses** is here implied.

One further important emphasis is on **the need for holiness and purity** in every section of the community, both in the period of preparation and also en route. Chapters 5-6 comprise a variety of laws that have little in common other than that they all concern the purity of the camp and the people. They are inserted, doubtless, as de Vaulx (12) observes, "in order to show that the people will only be able to depart for the conquest of the promised land if it is in a state of sufficient purity." Chapters 8:5ff and 9:6ff also have significant teaching on this same theme. Childs (1979:197) comments aptly, "the entire emphasis falls on characterising the nature of being separated to God in preparation for becoming a pilgrim people on the move".

In the first part (10:11-36) of the new section which begins at 10:11 the same main emphases are evident, apart from the stress on purity/ consecration (presumably now complete).

The **journey to the land** is very much to the fore, having now recommenced (v 12). The repeated use of ns^c (vv 12, 13, 14, 17, 18, 21, 22, 28) underlines the emphasis on movement; while the 'order of march' (v 28) is exactly as prescribed in the earlier chapters /5/. Moreover, the journey is described now in terms that expressly recall the patriarchal promise (so, Clines, 55). The people are (v 29) 'setting out for the place (here not 'rs but mqwm) of which Yahweh said, 'I will give it to you'". In the mention of the 'three days' journey' (v 33) we are, perhaps, intended to see a conscious echo of the exodus (Ex 3:18; 5:3; 8:27; 15:22). As the march begins the mention of the 'wilderness of Paran' (v 12) anticipates 12:16 and indicates that it is

a journey on which progress was made (cf v 33; 11:35; 33:16-18).

Once again, it is evident that Israel is setting out as **an army on a military campaign** (v 35), intent on victory; while, again, **the leadership is seen to be in the hands of Moses**: the divine command to Israel comes by him (v 13), and each fresh movement of the ark is accompanied by his ritual word (v 35). It is further mentioned that the consecrated 'army' set out in expectation of Yahweh's goodness (twb, vv 29, 32).

Chapters 11-12 which are to be the focus of our study in this chapter consist of three sections (11:1-3; 11:4-35 and chapter 12) which, as Jobling (1986a:31) notes, are clearly delineated by locale and by the closure of the incident in each. However, it is necessary for us to take the three sections together /6/ in their entirety when making an analysis for they have not proved amenable to source-analysis (so, Noth, 1972:128, n 363).

Certainly, there is general agreement that the material in all three sections - except possibly 11:7-9 which Oesterley (38) ascribes to P - belongs to JE, the early narrative level of the Pentateuch, but beyond that there is no consensus as to how the material is to be apportioned between J and E. "The purely linguistic data are indecisive; much turns on interpretation and relation to other passages, the origin of which is also often doubtful" (so, G.B. Gray, 99). Moreover, many inter-relationships /7/ among the sections invite us to follow Noth (1972:128) in regarding them as a unit at some stage of the 'literary elaboration' of the traditions.

Some of these inter-relationships are strikingly revealed by the pattern recurring in the first (11:1-3) and third (ch 12) sections, and also, to a lesser extent, in the second section (11:4-35).

Jobling (1986a:42), building on the work of Culley (102), has suggested a parallel outline for 11:1-3 (A) and chapter 12 (B), which we follow here, only altering the numbering and including certain suggested parallels from the middle section, 11:4-35 (C):

	A	B	C
(1) Offence/ Complaint	1	1-2	4-6
(2) Yahweh's overhearing of this	1	2	10?;18
(3) Kindling of his anger	1	9	10; 33
(4) Physical effects of punishment	1	10	20?;33
(5) Appeal to Moses	2	11-12	
(6) Appeal by Moses to Yahweh	2	13	13?
(7) Limitation of the punishment	2	14-15	34?

We will require to examine the references to the rwḥ with respect to this pattern in order to determine the bearing such a pattern might have on our understanding or interpretation of the function of the 'spirit of Yahweh' in the present passage.

COMPLAINTS

The accounts related in each of the three sections begin with a complaint and are regarded as forming part of the murmuring tradition of the Hebrew Bible /8/.

In the first of the three sections, 11:1-3, the barest of details is given. The people (C_m) are said to 'complain'. The verbal root used here, 'nn, is rare and of uncertain meaning, occurring elsewhere only in Lam 3:39. The commentators point to a cognate Akkadian word meaning "sigh". The verb is rendered "to complain" or "to murmur" by BDB and was evidently understood in this way by LXX which uses diagogguzōn, a compound form of gogguzōn, the word it consistently uses to translate lwn (cf Ex 15:24; 16:2; 17:3), from which we can deduce, with Coats (1968: 125) that "at least for the LXX the participle refers to the same kind of event which composes the murmuring tradition".

The content of the people's complaint is not specified /9/, being described only as their 'misfortunes' (RSV for r^c, MT). Snaith's (1969:139) emendation of r^c to r^cb ('hunger') [cf also BHS] is an attempt to make this a deprivation story, but lacks any textual warrant and fails to take account of the context.

Jobling (1986a:34) follows a long tradition in arguing that it is against the wilderness journey as such that the people complain. In the final form of the text this would certainly appear to be the case. As we have seen, the main theme of the immediately preceding section (10:11-36) is the resumed march. Moreover, r^c (cf v 15) contrasts vividly with the fwb Yahweh had promised (10:29, 32). The people seem to be disenchanted with their lot and are beginning to rebel against the whole journey.

The complaint certainly reflects badly on Yahweh and is evaluated by him (and the biblical writer) as illegitimate, for it rouses his anger.

In the third and final section, chapter 12 /10/, the complaint is made by Miriam and Aaron and is directed against Moses. The verb used this time is dbr with the preposition b /11/. This seems to fulfil much the same function as 'nn in 11:1.

The nature of the complaint is not altogether clear. There appear to be two distinct grounds for the opposition: Moses' marriage (v 1); and his claimed uniqueness (v 2) /12/; but, in the event, it is the latter of these which is pursued in the story as Aaron and Miriam challenge the uniqueness of Mosaic leadership and authority, claiming for themselves the same status as Moses, at least with respect to the mediation of the divine word /13/.

This challenge is, however, regarded as a rebellion against Yahweh, as the inclusion of the words, "and Yahweh heard it" (v 2), suggests (cf the pattern p 11 above). Accordingly, we would expect at this point a mention of the

kindling of Yahweh's anger (cf 11:1). This, however, is deferred until v 9. Meanwhile, we have an expansion (vv 3-8) /14/ in which the wrongness of Miriam and Aaron's action is clearly exposed by means of highlighting both the incomparable and unimpeachable character of Moses (v 3) and also the uniqueness of his relationship to Yahweh (vv 6-8). Moses is more than a prophet. "His hearing and seeing are better than [that of] the prophets" (so, Jobling, 1986b: 50). He is "supra-prophetic, supra-Aaronic" (so, Coats, 1968:263).

The middle section of the three, 11:4-35, is much more complex than either of the other two and this is reflected in the fact that it does not follow exactly the pattern of the other two sections (see above p 11).

Although this section also begins with an account of a complaint, here the complaint functions on (at least) two levels: one emanating from the people of Israel (vv 4-6); the other from Moses (vv 11-15). We consider these in turn.

In vv 4-6 it would appear that two separate groups are involved in the complaint: the "rabble" ('spsp) /15/ and the "people (bny) of Israel" (cf 12:1 where two individuals are involved). Elsewhere in this section the people are denoted by the word c_m, which leads us to conclude (on a holistic reading of the text) that the 'spsp and the bny here, constitute the c_m in the rest of the section. The use of the twofold designation would appear to be deliberate and to be an attempt to explain why only one section of the people (c_m) was destroyed (cf v 34) [so, Coats (1968:110) who comments: "the word ('spsp) does show that the subject of the desire is not the whole people of Israel"]. /16/

The object of the rabble's "strong craving" [cf the aetiology in v 34] is not specified but presumably it is for meat (so, Noth, 1968:85) /17/.

The word order in v 4 suggests that it is the rabble who incite the people (so, Jobling, 1986a:40): "the desire for

a mixed diet is instigated by the mixed rabble". /18/ Consequently, the people "wept again". Whatever its original reference may have been in the tradition /19/ it is highly likely that in the final form of the text the "again" alludes to the complaining of v 1 (so, Riggans, 86) and is included here in order to underline that what follows is a further example of unjustified complaint on the part of the people. In keeping with this, the weeping should be considered negatively. /20/

The culpability of the complainants is further highlighted by the desire for the food of Egypt which would appear to reflect an accusation about the exodus itself and contempt for their redemption by Yahweh (cf vv 18, 20). Their inclinations run completely counter to Yahweh's purpose for them and, indeed, to the whole thrust of the Book of Numbers to this point (cf pp 7-8 above). As Jobling (1986a: 39) notes, "the people's desire for meat conceals a desire to return to Egypt counter to the main programme" (cf 14:2-4; 20:5; 21:5). /21/

The rejection of the manna, God's special provision for Israel during the march, also implies a rejection of Yahweh himself (cf v 20) and further underlines the people's culpability.

Vv 7-9, which are often regarded as a secondary addition /22/, function in the present context to underline the error in the people's assessment of the manna (cf 12:3-8 which functions in a similar way in chapter 12). This is nowhere more clearly implied than in v 9, where, in contrast to the people's assessment of the 'dryness' associated with the manna (v 6), the narrator reminds us of its association with the 'dew' which Riggans (88) describes as "daily water" and Jobling (1986a:59) as the "transitory water of the desert". In addition, the use of yrd to describe the descent of the manna reflects the repeated use of the word to describe the activity of Yahweh (cf vv 17, 25 and 12:5) and hints at the divine origin of the manna (so, Wenham, 108). Again, and in contrast to the quails

which fell outside the camp (v 31), in the place of impurity (cf 12:14-15), the manna fell upon the camp. Furthermore, all this happened "in the night", indicating not only the secret nature of the manna's provision, but surely also the fact that it avoided any delay in the march (this in complete contrast to the quail. Cf vv 20 and 32).

Following the pattern established in vv 1-3, we would expect to find a reference at this stage to Yahweh's anger, followed immediately by some indication of the (physical) effects or outworking of this anger. Instead, we find an elaborate account of Moses' complaining response to what he heard (vv 11-15). The mention of the effects or outworking of Yahweh's anger is delayed until vv 18ff and vv 31ff.

This complaint of Moses follows on his 'displeasure' (r^c) (v 10), the use of r^c reflecting its use in v 1 (cf vv 11, 15) and also contrasting with the "good" promised and expected (see above pp 10-11, on 10:29, 32; 11:1). This would seem to place Moses, at least to some extent, in a similar position to that of the people in v 1, when they complained about their r^c. Indeed, Jobling (1986a:35) suggests that here Moses is Yahweh's antagonist (as the 'people' had been in v 1, and the 'rabble' in v 4). He further suggests that Moses' displeasure is not merely with the people's complaint, but with the whole situation, including Yahweh's anger [so also, G.B. Gray (106); and Coats (1968:102)]. However, in his complaint against Yahweh, Moses makes no mention of Yahweh's anger.

As we attempt to identify what it was that 'displeased' ("r^c in his eyes") Moses, it becomes necessary for us, at this point, to make reference to the source analysis of this section, which as we have already noted is very difficult to ascertain, not least in vv 11-15.

There are at least two distinguishable elements within this passage: the sending of the quails in response to Israel's complaints; and the appointment of seventy elders in response to Moses' request to God for help in bearing the

burden of the leadership of the people. This leads many commentators to believe that we have here a combination of two previously separate narratives or traditions (so, e.g., Binns, xxix), or at least a basic tradition supplemented by a story, often thought of as a later accretion (so, e.g., Budd, 126).

There is general agreement amongst the commentators that vv 4-10, 18-23 and 31-35 belong to the quail tradition and vv 16-17 and 24-30 to the elders' tradition. There is, however, no similar consensus with regard to vv 11-15. Budd (124), Sturdy (1976:83), et al regard v 13 as part of the quail tradition and vv 11-12, 14-15 as part of the elders' tradition. Noth (1968:83), on the other hand, takes vv 11-13 as part of the basic quail narrative with vv 14-15 as a later insertion; while G.B. Gray (107) is of the opinion that vv 11-12 and 14-15 were probably not originally connected with either of these incidents. Wenham (108) doubts the suggestion that two stories have been combined and cites as evidence the balanced palinstrophic pattern of the prayer in vv 11-15. A close examination of the Hebrew text does in fact show that the phrase "all this people" of v 13 is required to complete the structure of the prayer:

- A. dealt ill (v 11)
- B. found favour in thy sight (v 11)
- C. the burden of all this people upon me (v 11)
- D. all this people (v 12)
- E. carry them to the land. Where am I to get meat? (12-13)
- D1. all this people (v 13)**
- C1. carry (same rt. as burden in C) all this people (14)
- B1. find favour in thy sight (v 15)
- A1. my wretchedness (same rt. as dealt ill in A) (15)

This would seem to imply that, if not originally a unit, then, at the very least, these two stories were combined at an early stage in the tradition. It is now impossible to separate them and clearly, therefore, we are intended (by the narrator) to read them as one.

That being the case, we must assert that Moses is troubled, on the one hand, by the people's rebellious rejection of the manna and their weeping for a kind of food which he is unable to provide (v 13); and, on the other hand, by the fact that Yahweh has placed upon him alone (v 14; also the imagery of the wet-nurse in v 12) the whole "burden" of this complaining, rebellious people.

When he accepted leadership of them it was on the understanding that they were adult, even a consecrated 'army' - now he finds that they are no better than 'greeting weans' (cf v 12) and, like many a weary wet-nurse/ baby-sitter, he feels that he can no longer cope with their unreasonable and inordinate demands and tantrums - he can no longer take the strain. So, he makes his complaint (vv 11-15) to the legitimate parent, Yahweh (v 12), who had promised something better (twb, 10:29) than this.

The question then arises as to whether this complaint of Moses is viewed by Yahweh in exactly the same way as the other complaints in this passage. To answer this we need to look at Yahweh's response to each of the complaints.

YAHWEH'S RESPONSE(S)

In the first section (11:1-3), Yahweh's overhearing /23/ of the complaint is followed immediately by a note of the kindling of his anger, the request or complaint being evaluated by Yahweh (and the biblical writer) as illegitimate (so, Wilson, 1980:151; Culley, 101). Consequently, there follows immediately an account of the physical effects of his anger, here in terms of the "fire of Yahweh" burning /24/ among them.

Fire is often used as a symbol of the presence and awesome holiness of Yahweh (e.g. Ex 3:2; 13:21-22 (cf Num 9:15-16); 19:18; and esp. Ex 24:17 /25/). Here, it is more particularly a sign of his judgement as, for example, in Gen 19:24; Lev 10:2; and Num 16:35.

However, it is not clear what damage, if any, was caused by the fire. We are told only that it "consumed (^{'k}l, cf note /10/) at the extremity (RSV, 'some outlying parts') of the camp". Contra G.B. Gray (99) and Coats (1968:126), it is unlikely that any of the people were destroyed. The fire may have been intended only as a threat (so, Maarsingh, 38) with a view to bringing the complaining to an end. Wenham (107) thinks the people are treated gently at first.

If Wildavsky (132) is over fanciful in his suggestion that it is "memories of the old ways in Egypt" that were burnt out, he is probably correct in hinting at an intended element of purging. Indeed, Riggans (85) here describes the fire as "a manifestation of [Yahweh's] purging power" and further comments that "his judgement is his purification" /26/.

We have already seen the emphasis in the first ten chapters on the need for purity and consecration in preparation for the march (p 9 above). Clearly, if the march is to continue and reach its goal the purity and consecration of the people will need to be renewed again and again. /27/

Ironically, it is his own people/ army that Yahweh rises to fight against (cf 10:35). It becomes apparent from this incident, as from the whole of chapters 11 and 12, that the immediate threat to the success of the march lies within the community itself and not from any external power or enemy. Perhaps, however, we have here an anticipation of the trouble caused by the 'rabble' (v 4). If they are the 'mixed multitude' of Ex 12:38, might it not be the case that they are encamped around the boundary of the camp? [In the encampment order, earlier (ch 2), no mention is made of where they dwell.]

In the third section, chapter 12, the guilt of Miriam and Aaron having being established (vv 3-8), the third element of the pattern (cf above p 11) is found at v 9, with the reference to the "anger of Yahweh" being kindled against them. The plural 'them' seems to imply that both Miriam and

Aaron are objects of the divine anger, although only Miriam is said to have been afflicted with leprosy (cf note /11/).

Wenham (113) and Coats (1968:262) suggest that Aaron was spared perhaps because as high priest his role was vital to the divine economy. However, Jobling (1986a:40) is probably closer to the mark when he asserts that the punishment falls not on the seduced party but on the seducers.

Prior to the mention of the leprosy, it is intimated that Yahweh "departed" (v 9). Jobling's claim (1986a:41) that this signals the departure of the prophetic gift they have enjoyed, lacks any substantial evidence [would it not have similar implications for Moses?]. Moreover, it seems to me that the point being made in vv 6-8 is that Moses is more than a prophet (see above p 13), not necessarily, then, detracting from the role occupied by Miriam and Aaron. This uniqueness of Moses is further attested by the fact that in what follows Aaron acts through Moses (v 11).

With regard to the affliction of Miriam with leprosy, Jobling (1986a:37-38) makes the tentative suggestion that this punishment can be illumined by examining the laws concerning skin disease in Leviticus, particularly 13:9-17, on which he bases his discussion, concluding that Miriam is not rendered unclean, but is marked with the whiteness of a skin disease which has run its course. However, read in the light of 5:1-4; and Miriam's expulsion from the camp (to the area of the unclean) it is surely preferable to regard Miriam here as having been rendered unclean.

Her crime is comparable to those who would provoke a father's spitting on the face (v 14), and hence she is to be excluded from the camp for the required period of time. This may mean that she has been healed at once, in response to the prayer of Moses, in which case only the ritual pollution remains. The failure to mention healing (LXX adds "she was cleansed" at this point) and subsequent inspection suggests that this is the case. Mosaic prayer is normally effective at once (so, e.g., G.B. Gray, 128). Miriam is to

undergo a "public shaming" to balance her private confrontation (so, Riggans, 104).

Noth (1968:97) is of the opinion that "the clemency of the divine decision" is brought out here, in that Miriam has to suffer only punishment of a "trivial though shameful offence". Tunyogi (385) also regards it as an illustration of the divine grace. Nevertheless, the cleansing process requires seven days /28/, entailing a clear delay in the march, running counter to the whole movement of the narrative of Numbers.

After the period of purification was accomplished, we learn (v 16) that the journey was resumed, and that despite the altercations, progress was made towards the promised land, Paran having already been mentioned proleptically in 10:12. [?]
(אלף?)

When we come to the middle section, 11:4-35, once again we find a much more complex picture.

For one thing, from v 16 onwards there are in fact two strands running alternately and in parallel through this section with respect to the twofold complaint concerning 'the burden of all this people' and the 'meat' (the people's complaint being subsumed under that of Moses).

In vv 16-23 we have, in the form of a double-edged promise-cum-threat, Yahweh's reply to the complaints of both Moses and the people: vv 16-17 dealing with the sharing of the burden of leadership; and vv 18-23 dealing with the provision of meat. The promise-cum-threat is then fulfilled in vv 24ff and vv 31ff.

One question that will have to be resolved if we are to know in what sense the references to rwḥ are to be understood is whether, as Jobling (1986a:40) maintains, each side of the promised provision (re 'burden' and 'meat') is regarded as being entirely parallel in terms of Yahweh's purpose. Jobling regards Yahweh as cooperating with the complainant in each case (providing the meat the

people desire and the assistance Moses desires), only later to reveal his true purpose as being quite contrary to their desires. He speaks of this as Yahweh's "deception" of the complainants: "the rebels do not know what Yahweh is really doing".

If this section were seen to follow in detail the same pattern as the other sections we would certainly have to conclude that in this context the rwḥ is to be regarded negatively as an instrument of Yahweh's anger and as the bearer of punishment. However, as we have noted above (pp 10-11), the pattern is only partially in evidence here and so we will require to look more closely at the text.

We consider firstly the strand that deals with the matter of the 'meat'.

As we have noted, in vv 18-23 Yahweh intimates his intention, which he then carries through in vv 31-35.

At first sight, it would appear that Yahweh is responding favourably to the people's request for 'meat' (compare 12:5). In v 18 they are encouraged to "consecrate" themselves (hithpa^cēl of qdš) for eating meat, which suggests the preparation for a holy appearance and perhaps also for a sacred meal for which ritual cleanness was essential (cf. Ex 19:10, 15; Jos 3:5; 7:13).

However, it soon becomes clear that the 'consecration' is not all that it appears to be at first. For one thing, the ironic nature of the demand for consecration is evident when contrasted with the clear indictment of v 20, "you have rejected Yahweh". Further, the intimated result of the promised 'banquet' was to be, in Coats' words (1968: 107), "discomfort for the people and abhorrence for the very item they desired" (cf v 19). Moreover, as the plot develops it becomes clear that the consecration is to take place by way of a judgement, even slaughter (cf Jer 12:3), through which Yahweh himself purges the camp (v 33; cf v 1; 12:15).

This note of judgement which is made very explicit in v 33, is already present in v 19 and is - in keeping with the pattern we have seen in the first two sections - anticipated by the mention of Yahweh's (over)hearing of the people's weeping (v 18). The weeping is to be understood as illegitimate (cf also v 10).

The illegitimate nature of the people's complaint and demand is further exposed by their favourable mention of Egypt both in verse 18 and verse 20. We have already noted (p 14 above) that this predilection for Egypt is ominous, running completely counter to Yahweh's purpose for them and, indeed, a clear indication of their rejection of Yahweh, as it is here.

The people's assessment of their former way of life in Egypt ("it was well (twb) with us in Egypt") should be read in the light of their earlier assessment of the journey as r^c (v 1) and also in clear conflict with Moses' anticipation of Yahweh's goodness (twb, in 10:29, 32). It would appear that they have reached the stage where they are calling evil good and good evil.

Indeed, v 20 makes it clear that the issue ultimately is not one of food, but rather of the exodus itself: "Why did we come forth out of Egypt?" (cf 14:2,3,4,19,22). This is the fourth quotation of the people's cry and the only one which does not mention 'meat' (cf vv 4, 13, 18). Coats (1968: 107) designates it as a 'climax of intensification': "the previous quotations have referred to Egypt in anticipation of the final quotation".

The people are taking issue not only with the food provided on the march, but with the very march itself, and even with Yahweh's redemptive work through the exodus, which, as we have already noticed (p 7 above) is clearly emphasised throughout this book, not only in the explicit mentions it receives in 1:1 and 9:1 but also in allusions to it in the Passover legislation in ch 9:2ff and in the mention of

'three days' journey' (9:33), items which have their parallels in Ex 12.

Clearly, the people have rejected Yahweh and hold his redemptive work in contempt. Little wonder then that punishment is intimated (vv 19-20) (a fact which in itself tells against Jobling's view - above p 21 - that this is 'deception' on Yahweh's part). The "gift" of quail will in fact be a punishment and intimation is made of that, thus increasing the people's culpability.

In verses 31-35 we have the enactment of what was promised or, rather, threatened in vv 18ff.

The requested meat, provided here in the form of quails, was brought by "a wind (rwḥ) from Yahweh".

Despite Jobling's view (1986a:41) that "the juxtaposition of the two meanings of rwḥ (vv 25-29; and here) is, though curious, of doubtful significance", it seems to me to be of considerable import. Indeed, we might note the emphatic position of rwḥ as the first word in this verse. It is clearly meant to correspond in some way to the rwḥw of v 29 (also vv 17, 25, 26). /29/

Though the rwḥ is not here the "spirit of Yahweh" it is, however, associated with him. Indeed, we can say that he is its source. It "sets out" (ns^c cf, e.g., 10:33) from (m⁹t) him, and it comes bearing quails.

Were we considering vv 31ff in isolation, this activity on the part of the rwḥ might be considered ambiguous, since rwḥ (wind) from God can bring about purposes of both salvation/ blessing and judgement /30/. However, in view of the threatened judgement (vv 19-20), the mention of the quail-bearing "wind" from Yahweh here is surely ominous. And so it turns out to be (v 33). Here, then, the rwḥ is the agent not of blessing but of judgement [whatever may have been the case with a proposed different context /31/], a judgement which is indicated in a number of ways.

In contrast to the manna (v 9) which falls 'upon' (C1) the camp, the quails are said to fall 'round about' (sbybwt, cf v 24) the camp [contrast also Ex 16]. We have already noted (pp 18-20 above) the significance of the camp boundary as the line of demarcation between clean and unclean. The quail falls in the sphere of uncleanness (so, Wenham, 109) and requires that the people go outwith the camp into that area of uncleanness in order to gather it (compare 12:14). We might well say that the appearance and gathering of the quail points up the people's uncleanness which has halted the march. Furthermore, the very process of gathering the quail delays the march (contrast the manna, v 9) by a matter of days (v 32). But, above all, the judgement is indicated in v 33, where, as a result of the kindling of Yahweh's anger (cf v 10), the people were smitten with "a very great plague" /32/. Childs (1979:198) notes that "judgement by plague is particularly characteristic of divine wrath against the unclean".

The word "plague" (mkh) reminds us of the plagues associated specifically with Egypt and seems appropriate in view of the people's predilection for Egypt (vv 5, 18, 20. Cf Gen 12:10ff where ng^C is used). "After all, they have hankered for a taste of Egypt," (so Ackerman, 81). Here, Yahweh deals with the people much as he dealt with Egypt prior to and at the time of the exodus.

We have seen (v 5) that Egypt is equated in the thinking of the people with a variety of food. When, eventually, they are given 'extra' food, it proves fatal. Are we not to conclude that in the view of the narrator, Egypt is equated with death for Israel? The desire for Egypt is regarded as a death wish. The way of life for Israel is for them to continue on the Yahweh-appointed journey to the land of promise, sustained by the Yahweh-appointed food (vv 7-9).

In addition to the element of judgement evident in the story at this point, there is also, implicit in the story, an unaccountable act of grace on Yahweh's part, despite the fact that, in breaking with the pattern set in vv 1-3, no

mention is made of any repentance on the part of the people, or even of any appeal to Yahweh for mercy (contrast v 2; 12:11) [Is this because the rabble are non-Israelite?]. Yahweh appears graciously to have mitigated the punishment of a one month delay on the march (cf vv 19-20). But above all his mercy is shown in that only "the people who had the craving" (v 34) would appear to have been smitten by the plague. Jobling (1986a:34), Long (43) and Coats (1968:111) equate these with the 'rabble' of v 4.

It would appear, then, that in this story the 'people' are never punished at all (so, Jobling, 1986a:35), just as in chapter 12 Aaron escaped punishment. Punishment falls not on the seduced party, the bny or c_m, (though the text makes reference to the possibility of it) but only on the seducers, the 'spsp.

Indeed, it is possible that the people were kept from eating the quail (v 33: "while the meat was yet between their teeth, before it was consumed"). That is certainly how Coats (1968:109), Maarsingh (43), et al, understand v 33, although G.B. Gray (118) thinks there is no parallel for this view and translates as "exhausted" (similarly, Riggans (99) "before it ran out").

The mention of the burial of "the people who had the craving" completes the separation of the people from the rabble. In this way the people are seen to purify themselves and the camp in preparation for resuming the march. They are "consecrated" (v 18) by judgement! Jobling (1986a:56) comments: "the destruction of the rabble is thus the purifying of the alien edge of Israel" (cf on 11:2 above pp 17-18).

The uncleanness of the rabble [the internal enemy?] having been removed, the people/ army are now ready to resume their march to the land. V 35 indicates the progress that was made (cf 12:15-16).

In the present context the function of the rwḥ (= wind) must be understood negatively, in terms of punishment, but punishment which prepares Israel for the next stage of her journey to (life =) Canaan.

We now turn to a consideration of vv 16-17 and vv 24-30, the strand that deals with the matter of the burden of leadership (and in which we find mention of the "spirit of Yahweh").

As we have already noted, in vv 16-17 Yahweh intimates his intention, which he then carries through in vv 24-30.

Vv 16ff follow directly on Moses' complaint without any comment by the narrator and are clearly intended to be understood as Yahweh's response to that complaint.

In vv 16-17 Moses is bidden choose seventy /33/ experienced elders /34/ and officers /35/ of the people and the promise is given that they will be endued with the spirit in order that they might "bear the burden of the people" with him: "that you may not bear it yourself alone". 'Burden', 'bear' (from the same root as 'burden') and 'alone' are all found in Moses' complaint, in vv 11 and 14; vv 12 and 14; and v 14 respectively, and show clearly that what is promised here is Yahweh's resolution of the problem of the "burden" felt by Moses.

The question remains whether this intended solution is to be regarded as directly parallel to the 'gift' of the quails and so, negatively, as a judgement (as, for example, Ackerman, 81, suggests: "the rwḥ brings the incapacitating plague of ecstatic prophecy"). It has to be said, however, that in contrast to vv 18-23 and vv 31-35, in the verses under consideration here, there is no explicit (or even implicit) mention of rebellion against Yahweh; of the kindling of Yahweh's anger; of sickness, or death, or the delay of the march; any of which might indicate Yahweh's judgement and, so, the illegitimacy of Moses' appeal for assistance.

On the contrary, Yahweh's promise to "come down" could, in itself, be construed as an intimation of blessing. This is only one of eleven instances (cf BDB, 433) in the Pentateuch where God says he will come down, and so points to the importance of what is about to happen.

It is true that in Gen 11:5, 7 and 18:21 the descent is with a view to judgement. However, all the other references, bar one, concern Yahweh's purpose of blessing (Ex 3:8 with ref. to the exodus from Egypt; and Ex 19:11,18,20; and 34:5 - all with ref. to Sinai). The one exception is Numbers 12:5 (where the reference is (intentionally?) ambiguous).

We should compare the use of the verb in v 9 of the present section (above pp 14f) where the reference to the descent of the dew is to be read unambiguously as a blessing. It would seem that the reference here should be understood in a similar way, since, unlike 12:5, there is nothing in the context to suggest that we are meant to read it otherwise.

This is also in keeping with the wording of v 10, which Jobling (1986a:31) acknowledges to be difficult but which he has nevertheless not paid sufficient attention to. It seems to me that the intimation of Yahweh's anger in v 10, immediately prior to the mention of Moses' displeasure is not, as Noth (1968:86) suggests, premature but rather very intentionally positioned in order to make clear that Yahweh's anger is directed specifically against the people (cf v 33) and not against Moses whose complaint follows the intimation of Yahweh's anger.

There is every indication that Yahweh's provision of assistance is to be regarded in an entirely different and, even, opposite way to that of the quail - as a gracious and compassionate response on Yahweh's part (cf the use of hn in Moses' complaint (vv 11, 15)).

The question then is whether this treatment of Moses is similar to that of Aaron in chapter 12, and of the 'people'

in this section, vis-à-vis Miriam and the 'rabble' respectively. Is he being treated lightly as Aaron and the people were, because, as with them, he has been seduced rather than being a seducer?

It is not altogether clear that this is in fact the case. For one thing, it is evident from the text that the 'people' come under the same condemnation as the 'rabble' (e.g. 11:33); while Aaron confesses his own sin (12:11). In complete contrast, there is no such confession or even mention of any such culpability on Moses' part.

Another possible explanation of Yahweh's treatment of Moses here is that Yahweh is responding to Moses in accordance with the pattern of his responses to (mainly pre-Sinai [but see Num 20:1-13]) complaints from the people (cf Ex 14:10ff; 15:24ff; 16:1ff; 17:1ff), in which no mention is made of any punishment, the complaints, seemingly, being accepted (or, perhaps, tolerated?) by Yahweh as being, in a sense, justifiable, in that they address a genuine need /36/. Perhaps we are to understand Moses' complaint here likewise as legitimate, expressing a genuine grievance.

Yahweh agrees to provide Moses with the requested assistance and, to that end, promises to endow seventy elders with his spirit, presumably to equip them for the task of 'bearing the burden' of the people with Moses (v 17).

We have no further indication of what the specific functions of the 'seventy' were since we have no account of their further activity. From the references here, in Ex 24 and Ezek 8 - if these are to be regarded as referring to the same group (cf note /33/) - it would appear that their function should possibly be thought of in terms of some kind of mediation between the people and God (perhaps in terms of intercession?). Wenham (108) thinks that they must have been intended to give Moses spiritual support (cf Ex 24:9) since his administrative duties were already shared with others (Ex 18:13ff) /37/. Sturdy (1976:83) speaks of a

pastoral responsibility in addition to their judicial one. This would seem to be required by the context where there is no mention of a judicial role. It would also provide a link with the imagery of mothering and nursing in vv 12ff.

Though Yahweh agrees to provide Moses with the requested assistance, it is nevertheless made clear at the same time that Moses' unique role is not in jeopardy. In v 16 Yahweh speaks directly to Moses while in v 18 he mediates his message to the people through Moses. Also, it is Moses who has knowledge of the men and who must "gather" and "bring" them to the tent of meeting. Furthermore, it is to Moses alone that Yahweh is to speak (v 17, "I will ... talk with you (sg.) there"; cf also v 25; 12:8).

Vv 16-17 would lead us to believe, then, that the gift of the 'spirit' is viewed positively as Yahweh's gracious response to Moses' complaint. Moses is to receive seventy spirit-endowed assistants to aid him in 'bearing the burden' of the people, a move which does not detract from his own continuing uniqueness.

It remains for us to consider whether this positive and gracious view of the gift of the spirit is corroborated in vv 24-30 whose units "are to be interpreted in their present context", regardless of their origin (so, Wilson, 1979:330, n. 21).

In this connection, there are three items, any of which might suggest that things are not quite what they appear at first to be: the emphasis on prophesying; Joshua's objection (v 28); and, Jobling's assertion (1986a:36) that the whole thing "comes to nothing".

However, on closer examination there is no hard evidence to suggest that we should change our understanding of the gift of the spirit in this section.

Certainly, in vv 24-25, which give an account of the enactment of what was promised in vv 16-17, a new element

is introduced in that the coming of the spirit upon the seventy is said to result in "prophesying", while no mention is made of burden-bearing, a contrast (with v 17) which most commentators note.

However, the further insistence that this phenomenon was once-for-all and temporary (v 25) tells against Jobling's view (1986a:50) that "the potential leadership of the elders is here reduced to prophecy" and suggests, rather, that the prophesying is to be regarded as an authenticating sign of the seventy's introduction into their sacred office as 'burden-bearers', a role for which they are (presumably) also equipped by the spirit (v 17). ?

As far as Joshua's disapproval (v 28) is concerned, we argue below (p 40) that it is not prophesying per se to which he objects, but rather the threat posed to Moses' unique authority by the activity of Eldad and Medad within the camp. Moses' response (v 29) makes it clear that there is no real threat.

As to Jobling's assertion that the whole thing "comes to nothing", this is very much an argument from silence based on the fact that no further mention is made of the work of the seventy. However, the reference to the return of Moses and the elders to the camp (v 30) might as easily be read as a returning to the rebellious people to work out the implications of what had just taken place at the tent. *explains the silence* ?

We consider, now, more fully the role of the spirit in this section in the experience of Moses, the seventy, Eldad and Medad, and also in relation to v 29.

It is clear from vv 17 and 25 that the seventy are to be endowed with some of the same spirit that was "upon [Moses]" and so we have to clarify what 'spirit' is being referred to here: the spirit of Moses or the spirit of Yahweh?

Although it is only in v 29 that the spirit is unmistakably identified as the spirit of Yahweh (rwḥw), most

commentators assume that relationship in the earlier verses also. /38/ On a holistic reading of the text this is the way it must be understood.

Weisman (1981:225ff), however, thinks that the reference here is to the personal spirit (so also von Rad, 1965:8). He also finds a parallel in 2 Kgs 2:15 where the spirit of Elijah is said to rest on Elisha. /39/

He does however draw a distinction between the relationship of the spirit to the individual as defined in Num 11:17, 25 and 2 Kgs 2:15 and that defined elsewhere where the spirit in men is stirred up by Yahweh in order that his plans be realised in history (e.g. 1 Chr 5:26; Ezr 1:1; 2 Chr 36:25). In these latter references he regards the personal spirit as an internal entity in man, almost equivalent to "heart", whereas the spirit "which is upon Moses" (and "the spirit of Elijah") is "akin to an external supra-individual entity, which by a transference to others causes a radical shift in their status ... [this spirit] is a subject that has the power to affect others."

We might well ask in what sense such a "supra-individual" spirit, seemingly independent of the individual can be defined or classed as being personal to that individual. It would seem preferable to regard the spirit here as being Yahweh's, albeit mediated through Moses.

It is possible that this mediation of the spirit through Moses was intended in order to safeguard the continuing uniqueness of Moses and to underline the subordination of the seventy to him.

There is no indication as to when the spirit came upon Moses, whether at Sinai or prior to that. Clearly it was already upon him by this time. It would appear to have been a permanent possession. Buber (1946:165) describes Moses as the "carrier of the spirit, of a resting and constant spirit without any violent effects".

Not only is the spirit implicitly Yahweh's, but it is Yahweh - and not Moses - who is viewed as the one who dispenses and distributes the spirit here. He "took some of the spirit that was upon him [Moses] and put it upon the seventy elders." [This is further emphasised in the case of Eldad and Medad (vv 26ff)].

The verb, "took" /40/, is probably an imperfect qal rather than an hiph^cl, which Sam. reads both here and in v 17. G.B. Gray thinks that the hiph^cl is too violent for the context. /41/

The translation 'take from' is due to LXX and V. The Hebrew root strictly means 'join with, share' (cf. Gen 27:36; Ezek 42:6; Eccles 2:10).

Many commentators regard the spirit here as being conceived of materially (so, e.g., G.B. Gray, 110 and Noth, 1972: 129) or, at least, almost materially (so, Sturdy, 1976:85) and as something quantitative that can be divided (Gray, Noth, and Schoemaker, 21), shared (Budd, 128; Riggans, 94) or partly withdrawn [Lindblom (1962:101); similarly Jobling (1986a:36) who believes that Moses does suffer a diminishment but not a great nor necessarily a permanent one].

However, Keil (70) and Neve (18) aver that the spirit of Yahweh is not something material. In addition Keil does not think we can speak of a diminution of the spirit by division. Following a long tradition of interpretation (at least as old as Philo), he compares the spirit to a flame of fire which does not decrease in intensity but increases rather by extension; a view apparently shared by Jacob (126) [and also Koehler (144)] who speaks of the transfer of some of the spirit from Moses to the elders without any loss to Moses.

Neve (18) suggests the translation 'withhold' on the basis of Gen 27:36. The meaning, he says, is not that Yahweh "takes away" from Moses part of the rwḥ already belonging

to him but that he withholds some of that which is constantly being granted to him to bestow it on the elders. There is, however, no indication in the text that there is a constant bestowal of spirit to Moses (as if it were a substance being consumed). And even if that were in fact the case, it is doubtful whether the explanation Neve offers would result in anything different from that suggested by the translation "withdraw" or "share".

It is probably best to think in terms of a sharing or redistribution (so, Riggins, 94) of the spirit just as there is to be a sharing (so, Noth, 1968:87) or redistribution of the burden of leadership. This need not imply, however, that the spirit is material).

It is worth noting that it is the same spirit that rests on Moses and on the elders. Although the fact that they received the spirit "which was upon Moses", i.e., in a sense, through the mediation of Moses, and not as a gift direct from God would tend to suggest yet again the subordination of the seventy to Moses. Moses alone had direct relations with God (cf v 17; 12:6-8) [so, G.B. Gray, 111].

Binns (71) suggests that the placing of the spirit upon the seventy was done by the outstretched hand (presumably, of Moses cf Num 27:18; Deut 34:9), although there is no evidence of this in the present text.

The spirit is said to have "rested (knwh) upon" the seventy. The verb 'rested' is used with regard to the spirit only here and in Is 11:2 (of the Messiah). (It is also found in 2 Kings 2:15 with regard to the "spirit of Elijah" resting on Elisha. /42/)

In view of the way in which the text proceeds, it is difficult to see how the word 'rested' might explain the status of the receivers of the spirit rather than the cause of their activity, as Weisman (1981:227) suggests. Equally, in view of its use in Is 11:2 (and 2 Kings 2:15), it is

doubtful if we can regard it (with Weisman) as describing the last stage in the process of transferring the spirit. Rather, it would seem to indicate an abiding/ continuing presence of the spirit upon the elders as upon Moses (so, Buber, 1946:147-8), even though the "prophesying" which accompanied it ceased (see below pp 35-6). Significantly, the same verb is used in 10:36 of the ark stopping and remaining at various stages of the desert journey.

The result of the spirit resting upon the seventy was that they "prophesied" /43/.

There is no indication from this section as to what constituted "prophesying" in this particular case or what form it took. Certainly, it would appear that, in the case of Eldad and Medad (vv 26-27), the effects were visible and/ or audible to others. However, no words of prophecy /44/ (or of intercession, cf v 2 /45/) are mentioned.

Nevertheless, in the immediate context of Numbers 11-12, which as we have noted above (p 10), needs to be treated as a unit, the prophet is described in 12:6 as receiving divine revelation and communication in a visionary/ dream state /46/, a fact which may, in context [and in the narrator's intention?] have a bearing on the interpretation of "prophesying" here. But, on the other hand, there is no specific indication in the present section (11:4-35) that what is being described is the kind of experience indicated in 12:6. Indeed, as Weisman (1981:230) notes, the "narrator is strict in keeping the distinction between the divine utterance, only spoken to Moses (v 25), and the prophesying, in which Moses takes no part".

This lack of any mention of divine communication has led many commentators (e.g., Noth, 1968:89) to suggest that what is being described here is some form of ecstatic experience resulting from spirit-possession.

The use of the hithpa^cēl, rather than the niph^cal, form of the verb nb' has often been pointed to as confirmation of this.

There is no doubt that the hithpa^cēl is, at times, used to describe such frenzied activity (cf, 1 Sam 18:10) but there has been a great deal of debate as to whether this is always the case; and, indeed, whether the semantic distinction between the two verb forms is as clear as is sometimes maintained, for they often appear together and seem to carry the same meaning (e.g. 1 Sam 19:20ff). /47/

Whether or not any divine verbal communication took place, it would seem reasonable to assume that some form of behaviour [which may have included speech] was exhibited by the seventy - and certainly by Eldad and Medad - which was recognised by others as being characteristic of spirit possession.

Corroboration of this view may be found in Wilson (1979: 324-8), who seeks to bring the insights of contemporary anthropological studies to bear on this problem. He points out (326) that "within a given society possession behaviour is almost always stereotypical. In many societies the onset of possession follows a standard pattern". /48/

According to the MT, the prophesying is described as being only a temporary phenomenon (at least in the experience of the seventy): "but they did so no more" (v 25). By the addition of this phrase the point is surely being made that the seventy are not entering on a prophetic ministry. We must look elsewhere for the significance of this temporary burst of prophesying.

It seems likely that we are to regard it as a sign of the seventy's introduction to another type of sacred role/office - in context, that of co-burden-bearers with Moses (v 17). It is "a divine authentication necessary at the inauguration of a new institution in Israel" (so, Neve, 25); "a mark of divine choice [serving] to validate the

4 elder's new authority" (so, Wilson, 1979:331), /49/, or, more exactly, as Weisman (1981:230) points out, a sign "not so much of divine election as of divine endorsement of their prior selection by Moses". /50/

The prophesying will have acted as a confirmation not only to those experiencing it, and to the people (see below p 37 on Eldad and Medad), but also to Moses (cf v 23 "you shall see .. my word .. come true").

Noth's (1968:89) emendation to read "they did not cease" (from the root swp), presumably on the evidence of the Targum and Vulgate (so also AV, Schweizer (11), Ackerman (81) /51/, et al), was necessitated by his view that the emphasis on prophesying is very strange in the present context. He does not see how Moses' burden can possibly be relieved by the seventy elders being put into a state of ecstasy. Moreover, he notes that nothing more is said about the relief of the burden. He thinks that relief from a burden had already been dealt with in Ex 18:13-27 and that here the prophesying is being made to serve another purpose, namely the legitimation of ecstatic prophecy viewed as being derived from the spirit of Moses.

? However Noth's understanding must surely fall in that it depends on an emendation of an otherwise well attested and easily understood MT text. All the more so should it fall since his proposal gives the exact opposite sense of that of the MT. As Lindblom (1962:101, n. 80) comments, "to change the verb ... would destroy the very sense of the saying"). Moreover, as Noth himself admits, it is not said that from this time on the phenomenon of "prophesying" existed in Israel /52/.

? Furthermore, we have already presented a reasonable explanation of the connection between the "prophesying" and the 'bearing of the burden of the people' in terms of a confirming and legitimating sign, an explanation which finds contemporary corroboration in studies of possession trance. Parker (277), for example, informs us that why?

"possession trance often serves to designate persons for, and initiate them into, roles which they then normally perform without resort to such abnormal states".

The fact that the prophesying ceased, however, does not necessarily imply (as, e.g., Lindblom (1962:101, n 80) and G.B.Gray (113) suggest) that the equipment with spirit was momentary. It may be assumed that the spirit continued to rest upon the elders (so, Snaith, 1944:155, "the power of judging and governing the people nevertheless remained with them as an abiding ability").

There still remains to be considered the intriguing case of Eldad and Medad (vv 26-30) /53/ upon whom also "the spirit rested" with the result that they too "prophesied".

The difficulty of deciding whether or not these two were among the original seventy chosen by Moses can be seen in the lack of consensus amongst commentators at this point. The MT would seem to imply that they were [so also BDB who translate "left behind", Snaith (1969:143), Maarsingh (41), Wilson (1979:331), et al]. The LXX, however, seems to have counted them as additional. /54/

The former interpretation would appear to be supported by the description of Eldad and Medad as being "registered" (ktbym). But, since v 25 specifies that the seventy received the spirit at the tent, G.B. Gray (104), amongst others, thinks that this term refers to the whole body of the elders from whom the seventy were chosen. It is, however, just as likely that the reference is to the 'seventy'. /55/

No reasons are given as to why the two should have remained behind. Binns (71) suggests that perhaps they were unclean (cf 1 Sam 20:26), though in that case the gift of the spirit seems strangely inappropriate especially when one remembers the great emphasis in Numbers on the need for purity (see p 9 above). Moreover, the Miriam incident shows

that impurity is dealt with by expulsion from the community (12:15), while here the fact that what happened was "in the camp" is repeated three times over.

Jobling (1986a:37) thinks that Moses is to blame for not gathering them to the tent with the rest, with the result that Yahweh endowed them with his own spirit (cf v 29). However, there is no indication in v 26 that the spirit is any different from that mentioned in v 25. The wording of v 26 follows that of v 25 so closely that we are to understand that it was the same spirit which came upon each group, with the same result. Moreover, we have already argued (pp 30-1 above) that it is the spirit of Yahweh which is meant throughout this section.

Jobling's further suggestion that the prophesying of this pair is different from that of the seventy in that no mention is made of its cessation, fails to take account of the fact that the inclusion of vv 27-29 at this point is reason enough for not mentioning the cessation of their prophesying (certainly at the end of v 26 and after that it becomes unnecessary). Moreover, the parallelism between v 25 and v 26 suggests that not only is the identity of the spirit and both the mode and result of its accession in terms of prophesying identical in each case, but also the duration of the prophesying.

It seems to me that if any difference between the prophesying of the seventy and of the two is being highlighted in these verses, it is in the sphere of their activity: the seventy prophesied at the tent of meeting, the two "in the camp (bṁḥnh)", a phrase occurring three times in vv 26-27. Surely this is where the burden of these verses lies! /56/

From the point of view of the final form of the narrative we should probably follow Sturdy's (1976:86) suggestion that Eldad and Medad's presence and activity "in the camp" was necessary to make the next part of the story possible. In this way, not only Moses (so, Wenham, 108) but also

Yahweh, ^{was he?} was able to give the prophesying, and so the new 'pastoral team' his public approval. /57/

Binns' suggestion (70) that the verse teaches that God's grace is not confined to certain offices depends wholly on proving that Eldad and Medad did not in fact belong to the original seventy. Likewise, with G.B. Gray's suggestion (115) that the whole episode is an important illustration of the belief that Yahweh did not confine his gifts to particular persons or classes. Eldad and Medad would appear to have had at least some kind of officially recognised authority in the community, in that they were "registered".

There is more to be said for Vriezen's (174) suggestion that the verse shows that the spirit of God is not tied to the sanctuary but entirely free; similarly, Parker (280), who comments, "the situation reflected in this pericope is the resistance of spirit possession to attempts to limit it to prescribed institutional settings". This certainly identifies the true burden of vv 26-27. In the final form of the text, these verses do indeed underline the fact that the initiative was with Yahweh, not Moses, and that the bestowal of the spirit was in a sense independent of Moses and also of the tent of meeting. /58/ Yes, but what sense?

Nevertheless, the purpose of the emphasis on the camp as the sphere of the prophesying of Eldad and Medad would still seem to me to be that of ensuring that the people, who were themselves not at the tent but in the camp, were made aware of what was happening at the tent and, in particular, that the prophesying and leadership of the elders, far from being a threat to Moses' authority, had, rather, his approval and, furthermore, was seen to be happening at Yahweh's instigation. This is further underlined by the following incident (vv 27ff).

The activity of Eldad and Medad 'in the camp' clearly caused concern in Israel. This is seen firstly in the response of the young man (v 27) who ran to inform Moses of

what was happening in the camp; and also in Joshua's response.

We are not told what the young man's reaction was specifically. It may have been one of astonishment (cf the reaction of those who witnessed Saul's similar experience, 1 Sam 10:11ff). More likely, however, it showed concern on the part of the people that Moses' authority was under threat. This is certainly the case with Joshua /59/ who calls on Moses to "forbid them".

Joshua cannot have been objecting to the "prophesying" per se for he would surely have taken equal exception to the prophesying of the seventy /60/. Moreover, contrary to Ackerman's assertion (81), there is no indication in this present section that "prophesying" is regarded in a derogatory way as may have been the case at a later stage in Israel's history. *do we know this?*

It may be that Joshua objected to the fact that the two were not amongst the seventy chosen by Moses or that they continued prophesying, unlike those at the tent. But, as we have seen above, there is no clear evidence to support either of these suggestions.

Rather, his objection would appear to centre on the fact that they were not at the tent and therefore not in the presence of either Yahweh or Moses when they prophesied. /61/ This view appears to be borne out by contemporary experiences of possession according to Wilson /62/.

It seems that because of Eldad and Medad's absence from the tent, Joshua construed their prophesying as being independent of both Moses and Yahweh, and consequently as undermining Moses' authority - an authority which he calls on him to assert. This would appear to be the way in which Moses understood his concern: "are you jealous for my sake?"

It is also possible that Joshua construed the prophesying of Eldad and Medad as constituting a threat to the people's commitment to Yahweh, particularly if he suspected them of being under the influence of a spirit other than Yahweh's.
/63/

However, Moses reassures Joshua that his fears are unfounded for Yahweh is indeed the source of the spirit and of the prophesying of Eldad and Medad. Such would appear to be [at least part of] the function of the following words in the final form of the text /64/: "Would that all Yahweh's people were prophets /65/, that Yahweh would put his spirit upon them" /66/ (as he has on the seventy and Eldad and Medad!)

It seems to me that in the present context Moses' words should be understood in the sense suggested by Neve (19), "Would that all the Lord's people prophesied ...", that is, in keeping with the prophesying of the seventy elders, Eldad and Medad, as an external manifestation accompanying the gift of the spirit. He points out that there are no prophets elsewhere in this text, only elders who prophesy.
/67/

This view would appear to be further supported by Parker's (275) contention that "the noun, nabi', can refer to a person in, or subject to, possession trance".

Moses desires that all the people [compare the recurring use of this phrase in vv 11-15] of Yahweh - but not the rabble! - should prophesy, presumably as a sign of their endowment with and empowering by the spirit. After all, how much easier his task of leadership would be were this to be the case! No more 'greeting weans' to deal with - only a consecrated army of burden-bearers!!

Meanwhile, until such a time come, Moses and his newly appointed and equipped assistants must give themselves to the task of burden-bearing, a task to which they now turn together (v 30) as they return together to the camp.

Summary

We have noted that one of the main themes of the Book of Numbers is the march of Yahweh's consecrated people/army under the leadership of Moses towards the land promised to them. From our study it can be argued that both the sharing of the "spirit" and also the sending of the "wind", in their different ways, **help to promote the progress of the march and so, also, the fulfilment of the promise**, which had been jeopardised, not by any external enemy, but rather by elements within Israel itself ["no sooner does the promise begin to come into effect than it is beset by questions and negations" (so, Clines, 55)].

The sharing of the spirit helps to remove Moses' reluctance to go any further, while the sending of the quail-bearing wind, though initially delaying the march (while the people gather the quail), nevertheless brings Yahweh's purging agent to the people, thus consecrating them in preparation for a renewal of the march. We might even say that in this way **Yahweh's rw breathes new life into Yahweh's army**, encouraging its leadership, and quickening its progress towards the attainment/ fulfilment of the promise.

? The sharing of the spirit was also clearly a mark of **Yahweh's mercy towards Moses (and so also towards Israel)**.

We can also think of the spirit as the **agent of blessing** to Yahweh's people (equipping burden-bearers), while the wind acts as the **agent of judgement** in relation to Israel's (internal) enemies.

Moses is portrayed for us as a permanent bearer of the spirit whose unique position and authority were not affected by the appointment of seventy (-two?) elders as his pastoral assistants.

In the experience of the seventy, the spirit can be regarded as the inspiration behind their prophesying which may have entailed ecstasy and/ or divine verbal

communication. This phenomenon, however, was only short-lived, thus functioning as a legitimating sign of their new pastoral, leadership role. Despite the temporary nature of the prophesying, we have every reason to believe that the spirit remained upon them as a permanent gift equipping and enabling them to fulfil their new role in Israel. ?

We are given no information as to how the spirit was communicated to these individuals, although the case of Eldad and Medad suggests that it was effected without human mediation (for example, by way of the laying on of hands, or anointing).

The possession of the spirit, though now shared by seventy-plus individuals, is still restricted to a small group in leadership. However, the hope is expressed that the possession might yet become universal (at least within Israel). ?

The spirit though not necessarily to be regarded in material terms, is however capable of redistribution.

CHAPTER TWO

JUDGES 2 - 16

Preface

The next significant references to the 'spirit of Yahweh' in the Hebrew Bible /1/ are to be found in the Book of Judges, in narratives about individuals who are called "judges".

This title, 'judge' (špṭ), is applied to these individuals only in the introduction (1:1-3:6) /2/ and in particular in 2:16-19, where it appears no less than six times. In the main body of the book (3:7-16:31), however, it is found only once (11:27) and that as a designation of Yahweh. Instead, another title, "deliverer" (mwšy^c), is ascribed to two of the judges, Othniel and Ehud (3:9,15).

It should be noted, however, that the verbal forms 'judge(d)' and 'deliver(ed)' are used much more frequently than the respective substantives. Five of the judges are said to have "delivered", and nine of them to have "judged", Israel. /3/

The number of the judges would appear to have been twelve in all: Othniel, Ehud, Shamgar, Deborah/ Barak, Gideon, Tola, Jair, Jephthah, Ibzan, Elon, Abdon and Samson. /4/ In order to arrive at this figure, however, it is necessary that Deborah/ Barak be counted as one; that Abimelech be not regarded as a judge; and that Ehud, Shamgar and Gideon be included, although, in the narratives in which they appear, they are not specifically said to have 'judged' Israel. /5/

This number twelve may be significant (all the more so because of the pan-Israelite emphasis in the introduction and main narratives - see note /18/). Certainly, Herrmann (115) considers it "hardly a coincidence", although he does go on to note that "we do not have one judge for each of

the tribes known to us" (see note /3/), a point which tells against Williams' (80) attempt to relate the judges to the twelve segments of the solar cycle, one for each tribe. This attempt involves him in somewhat forced deductions for which there is at the most insufficient evidence.

Ascertaining the role or function of the judges has proved to be one of the classic problems of the Book of Judges. They have, in fact, usually been classified into two groups, "major" and "minor" judges, on the basis of distinct roles and functions (see any of the major commentaries).

The so-called minor judges include Tola, Jair, Ibzan, Elon and Abdon (10:1-5 and 12:8-15). Shamgar (3:31) is often associated with these because of the brevity of the details concerning him and because of the formula introducing him (e.g., Jobling, 1986b:48). /6/

Othniel, Ehud, Deborah/ Barak, Gideon and Samson, some of whose exploits are recorded for us in greater detail, have usually been classified as major judges, while Jephthah is regarded as having characteristics of both categories (so, e.g., Soggin, 4). Indeed it is often with a study of Jephthah that scholars begin their investigation of this whole problem (e.g., from different perspectives, de Vaux, Mullen and Webb).

It was Alt (102) who, elaborating a theory proposed by Klostermann, first distinguished between the role of the 'major' judges who were considered to be charismatic, military leaders and that of the 'minor' judges who "exercised some form of legal jurisdiction over all Israel". After comparing the list of the minor judges with similar lists of medieval Icelandic "proclaimers of the law" /7/ Alt conjectured that the institution of the minor judge in Israel was associated with the adoption or preservation of Canaanite casuistic law by the league of tribes.

Alt's view was subsequently developed by Noth (1991:70) who regarded the minor judges as representing a particular office in the amphictyony. He maintained that the authority of these judges extended to all twelve tribes of Israel. They were appointed for life and succeeded each other. Their task within the amphictyony was to proclaim, explain and adapt, not the law borrowed from Canaan, as Alt claimed, but rather the 'law of God', which was the amphictyonic law. /8/

Many scholars have followed Noth in this, some of them adapting his theory in order to decrease or eliminate altogether any distinction between major and minor judges /9/. This alleged distinction between the two groups of judges has been challenged by others because of doubts raised against the amphictyonic hypothesis in general /10/ and, also, as a result of recent semantic studies of the root špt /11/. On the other hand, some of those who doubt the amphictyonic connection want to preserve the distinction between the major and minor judges (e.g., de Vaux, 1978:772f). There would appear to be no easy or ready solution to this classic problem of the Book of Judges.

However, in recent years the alleged distinction between major and minor judges has been challenged on somewhat different grounds by, for example, Hauser and Mullen, who have drawn attention to the literary structure of the Book of Judges itself. Hauser (190) maintains that the major/minor distinction is of use only in differentiating the length and style of the literary traditions and that no two offices can be maintained on the basis of the narrative traditions present in the book itself; while Mullen (189) suggests that the activities and functions of all the judges are defined by the literary framework of the book itself which, he believes, presents a structure for the concept of špt. He concludes (201) that the obvious distinctions between the literary presentation of the "major" judges and the "minor" judges reflect only a difference in literary purpose and not a difference in office.

Methodology

The Book of Judges has for long been regarded generally as a sequence of narratives with some binding material appended before and after - a pastiche rather than a unified work of art. However, in recent years, a number of studies have appeared in which the book is read in a synchronic or holistic way (e.g., the shorter studies of Lilley and Mullen; and the more elaborate studies of Polzin (1980), Webb and L.R. Klein).

It is this holistic approach that I intend to adopt and pursue in this study. Although note is taken of the often complex traditions and redactions which lie behind the present text, I wish to regard the Book of Judges as a structured entity in which elements are shaped to contribute to the integrity and significance of the whole. "Whatever sources may have been used ... the composition is no longer seen as a scrapbook of excerpts" (so, Lilley, 94).

The rationale for such an approach has been well laid out by Webb (13-40) and need not be rehearsed here. This has been further substantiated by Webb's own study and results (207-211) and also by the works of L.R. Klein and Polzin. In addition, Radday (469-99), in a computerised study by statistical linguistics, reckons that there is a very high probability (99%) that the 'main body' of the book is the work of one author, while similar results have been achieved for other sections.

Without accepting Williams' main thesis that Judges contains hints of an ancient solar calendar, we can, however, agree with his assessment (85) that "the more one examines Judges, the more one finds justification for the belief that the work is a most subtly and ingeniously coherent work".

Exposition

We begin our study of the Judges' material by considering the introduction 1:1-3:6, which precedes the account of the first judge, Othniel.

Although this section does not actually mention the spirit of Yahweh, it does, however, provide the elements of a framework which recurs in the following narratives of the judges. As such it lays the groundwork for understanding these narratives, including the role or function of the spirit of Yahweh in relation to the judges, and indeed to 'all Israel' during this period.

INTRODUCTION 1:1-3:6

For the purposes of our study we shall concentrate on the part of the introduction where the judges are specifically mentioned (2:6-3:6) and limit ourselves to some few comments in relation to 1:1-2:5.

The book opens with the observation that, "After the death of Joshua the people of Israel inquired of Yahweh, 'Who shall go up first for us against the Canaanites ...?', thus bringing the question of leadership over Israel to the fore from the outset. As the narrative continues, not only is the question 'who is to be leader?' raised, but also the further question as to the form that that leadership/government should take (a question which continues to be discussed in 1 Samuel 1-12).

When considered in conjunction with the closing words of the book (20:25, "In those days there was no king in Israel; every man did what was right in his own eyes"), this opening verse also points up the religious deterioration which took place throughout the period covered by the book of Judges. To begin with, Israel is in a desirable relationship to Yahweh, seeking his guidance. By the end of the book, however, his will is neither sought nor considered.

These questions of leadership and religious deterioration or apostasy are central to the Book of Judges and, as we shall see, are closely related to one another. Throughout the book, the "judges" are regarded as filling the leadership role. But, despite the fact that a major part of their intended function was to save the people from their apostasy and its consequences, we discover that, towards the end of the period, they (e.g., Gideon) are to be found leading the people back into apostasy.

Meanwhile, a process of deterioration at a different level is evident in chapter 1. The opening dialogue, between Israel and Yahweh (1:1-2) presupposes Joshua's valedictory in Joshua 23 (esp. vv 4-5) and Yahweh's promise there to dispossess the remaining nations after Joshua's death /12/. The victory oracle of v 2 suggests that the struggle for the land will soon be brought to a successful conclusion. This is borne out by the series of conquests recorded in vv 4-18.

However, as the chapter proceeds it becomes apparent gradually that the expectations created in the opening verses will not be fulfilled. Beginning with vv 19 and 21 there is a progressive shift in emphasis from conquest to co-existence as tribe after tribe fails to drive out the entrenched 'inhabitants of the land'. /13/

The full significance of this becomes clear only in 2:1-5, a passage generally regarded as deuteronomistic in phraseology and in its mode of thought [e.g. the covenant motif; cf J. Gray (ad loc) for fuller details], and which provides us with a theological interpretation of the events recorded in chapter 1. These verses also act as a transition to what follows.

The whole process of coming to terms with and co-existence with the inhabitants of the land is denounced as the making of a covenant (bryt) with them - a covenant which is incompatible with Yahweh's covenant with Israel which, as

we see from 2:1, had at its very heart the promised gift of the land.

Particularly offensive to Yahweh is the fact that Canaanite altars have been left standing. Although there has been no mention of this in chapter one, it is a rather obvious consequence of Israel's failure to drive out the Canaanites. Here, for the first time, the religious implications of Israel's military and political disobedience are brought out (v 3), "their gods will become a snare to you". This is further developed in the next section (2:6ff).

Meanwhile, the speech of 2:1-5 shows us the dilemma faced by Yahweh at this point and which is intensified as the narrative progresses (see 2:20-22 and esp. 6:7-10 and 10:10-16). How can Yahweh keep his oath to give the land to the Israelites (v 1) and, at the same time, fulfil his threat not to give it to them, or, at least, not all of it (v 3)?

At 2:6 we have a new starting point in the narrative, with what is, in effect, a flashback to an earlier assembly (2:6-9 is parallel to Jos 24:28-31 with, however, a slightly different sequence of verses). The new section (2:6-3:6) introduced at this point is generally regarded as one of the programmatic theological passages which organise the Deuteronomistic History. This is particularly true of vv 11-19, certain elements of which are taken up later in the book and form a recurring pattern which is used - though not slavishly - for the framework of the account of each of the judges.

There is, however, as we have seen above, a continuity with the preceding section. The religious apostasy which is the principle subject matter of 2:6-3:6 as a whole is regarded as a direct consequence of Israel's gradual coming-to-terms-with and co-habitation with the Canaanites described in 1:2-2:5. In 2:6-10 the whole period covered in 1:1-2:5 is reviewed again this time from a religious, rather than a

military and political, perspective: it is Israel's relationship with Yahweh (or lack of it) that is to the fore here. In particular, a contrast is made between the generation of Joshua and 'another generation' which arose who were ignorant of Yahweh's work for Israel and did not know Yahweh himself (v 10).

We have seen already that such a contrast is implied in chapter 1, but its full manifestation does not come until the outright apostasy of 2:11ff. 2:6-10 as a whole serves as a preface to the announcement which is made there: "the people of Israel ... forsook Yahweh ...". It offers an explanation of how this came about: the Israelites of this generation, unlike their forebears, did not have first hand experience of the 'great work' which Yahweh did for Israel under Joshua. At the same time it underlines the evil character of the apostasy by setting it against the background of what Yahweh had done for Israel and contrasting it with the faithfulness of Joshua and his generation.

We now consider more fully the programmatic passage - "a theological abstract of the whole work" (so, Gunn, 1987: 104) - vv 11-19, elements of which form the recurring framework pattern mentioned above.

In vv 11-13 Israel is indicted for her apostasy. Her evil is explained negatively as forsaking Yahweh and positively as serving the Baalim and the Ashtaroth ('other', foreign gods 'of the people round about them'). The nation had failed to abide by the first commandment given at Horeb (Deut 5:7; 6:12-15; etc). Here the gods whose altars were referred to in the speech of 2:1-5 come directly into view and the prophecy of v 3d is fulfilled. The succession of the verbs emphasises the radical nature of the apostasy.

The result of this apostasy was that Yahweh was angered and handed them over to the power of an oppressor, whom they were no longer able to resist (vv 14-15). The punishment

was also entirely in keeping with warnings previously given (e.g., Deut 31:29 and 28:25). /14/

Verses 16-19 introduce the judge (špt) who was raised up at the initiative of Yahweh alone.

It is clear from v 16b that the primary function of the judge was that of saving/ delivering the people from their oppressors, thus reversing the punishment spoken of in vv 14-15. This, as v 18 shows, was made possible by Yahweh's presence with the judge. In this saving role the judges were successful, liberating Israel from foreign oppression "all the days of the judge" (v 18c).

Soggin (39) follows a number of commentators in inserting in v 16 the phrase "And they cried to Yahweh" which appears in 3:8, 15; 6:6 and 10:10. He argues that penitence follows punishment and precedes salvation. However, only in 10:10 is there any explicit mention of behaviour that could be construed as evidence of repentance, and there it appears to be ignored by God! Furthermore, in the present context it is clear that even after salvation the response of the people is not one of repentance but of further apostasy (v 17). Rather, we should regard the omission of this phrase as deliberate, emphasising the compassion of Yahweh as the motivation for the raising up of the judges. This is implied in v 16a and made explicit in 18d. "His compassion not his justice constitutes the reason for the figure of the Judge" (so, Mullen, 191, whose further comments /15/ are, I think, significant for our understanding of the Deuteronomist's theology). *Why?*

V 17 would seem to suggest that, in addition to their saving role (v 16), the judges had another function - that of 'proclaiming the commandments of Yahweh' (so, Martin, 37; cf also Noth's views above p 46).

Mullen (192) suggests a further 'function' of the judge in his very existence. "The judge stands as an indictment of Israel's apostasy against the most basic demand of the

law." This is true in the sense that, were it not for Israel's apostasy there would have been no need of punishment and, so, no need of a judge, certainly not the kind required to act as a deliverer (cf 2:11ff)!

At this point, we might also note the description of Israel's unfaithfulness as harlotry (v 17b), an expression which embodies two complementary ideas: cultic prostitution; and the unfaithfulness of Yahweh's bride. The second of these ideas will be seen symbolically in the lives of the judges (particularly in that of Samson) as the narrative proceeds.

In v 17 a contrast is made between the Israelites of the Judges' era as a whole and their fathers, that is, faithful Israelites of the past (cf 2:6-10). In v 19, however, each generation within the Judges' era is compared with the generation which immediately preceded it and Israel is depicted as spiralling downwards into ever worsening apostasy, despite Yahweh's repeated interventions on their behalf.

Nothing is said at this stage of a similar and gradual decline within the judges themselves, but this becomes apparent as the narrative proceeds and the rule of the judges fails to conform to expectations set out in this framework. "With increasing pervasiveness problems with the judge system are permitted to appear" (so, Jobling, 1986b:60).

With v 20 we have reached a climactic point in the narrative. Yahweh's corrective punishments of Israel (vv 16-19) have had no lasting effect. It now appears that Yahweh's patience has been exhausted, and, as his anger flares up again, only this time, in response to Israel's behaviour throughout the entire judges' period, he confronts the dilemma we mentioned above (p 50), and puts the promise aspect of the covenant into abeyance, "I will not henceforth drive out before them any of the nations." Somewhat reluctantly, the judgement that was threatened in

2:1-3 is put into effect. This is confirmed in 3:5-6 where Israel is seen to have failed the test posed by the remaining nations (cf 2:22-3:4) - nations which are now to be left as a punishment.

These two verses also provide a conclusion to the whole introduction to the book, summarising the two main sections as follows:

v 5 the Israelites lived among the Canaanites... (cf 1:1-2:5)

(v 6a and intermarried with them) /16/

v 6b and served their gods (cf 2:6-3:6)

One of the main concerns of the introduction and, indeed, of the Book of Judges as a whole, is the question of why the Canaanites were not wholly expelled from Canaan; and why Israel did not come into possession of the whole land according to the promise which Yahweh had sworn to their fathers (1:2; 2:1). The answer given is that Yahweh, reluctantly withdrew the promise - or, at least, put it into abeyance - because of Israel's persistent and increasing apostasy during the whole period of the Judges. The whole of 1:1-3:6 is an elaborate justification for his decision to do so - a decision which is interpreted as Yahweh's reluctant but just judgment. The non-fulfilment of the promise is acknowledged but Yahweh is vindicated.[?]

The Judges' period ends with the relationship between Yahweh and Israel in a state of deadlock: no solution to the problem of Israel's apostasy is in sight. In particular, Israel (more addicted to other gods than ever) continues to "eke out a precarious existence in a land which it has never fully possessed and in which it is subjected to constant harassment by surrounding peoples" (so, Webb, 121).

OTHNIEL - 3:7-11

After the sweeping survey of the entire Judges' period in

2:6-3:6 we are returned in 3:7 to the same time and circumstances referred to in 2:11 of the introduction.

Here the 'main body' of the Book of Judges begins with the relatively short account of Othniel's judgeship. In this and the following narratives, the general statements of 2:10-3:6 are particularised in the stories of the individual judges. Also, the repeating framework pattern becomes apparent /17/. It should be noted, however, that this framework is complete and uniform only with some of the stories, while appearing only defectively with others. /18/

The Othniel narrative has all the elements of the framework.

V 7a repeats 2:11a exactly and reports the apostasy of Israel /19/. V 7b,c is parallel to and summarises 2:11b-13 and provides an explication of the apostasy, in both positive and negative terms.

V 8a repeats exactly 2:14a and shows the result of Israel's apostasy - the anger of the Lord against them, while the formula in v 8b, "and he sold them into the hand of", is parallel to 2:14b, indicating the result and consequence of Yahweh's anger, a period of foreign subjugation. Those who choose to serve (c_{bd}) foreign gods (v 7d) are made to serve (c_{bd}) a foreign tyrant (v 8c) - the punishment is commensurate with the crime.

The people's cry to Yahweh (v 9a) is regarded by Webb (127) as a new element. Certainly it does not appear in the introduction at this point in the cycle (though see the 'groaning' of 2:18). The cry, however, recurs at 3:15; 4:3; 6:6-7 and 10:10 (cf 15:18; 16:28) and would appear to be an integral part of the framework pattern.

Whether the cry should be construed as a sign of repentance is, however, debatable. Soggin thinks it should (see on 2:16, p 52 above). He is supported by Jobling (1986b: 138,

n. 7), who considers repentance to be "integral to the theory of the judge cycles", its absence in practice being an aspect of the break up of the theory. But, if that is so, we must ask why it is not present in 2:11ff. Polzin (1980:155-6) takes the opposite view, holding that Israel's faithlessness to Yahweh continued unbroken through the whole period of the judges. This, however, would appear to be at odds with at least some of the evidence (cf 10:10; 2:18-19), which would seem to point in the direction of the kind of mediating view held by Webb who argues (207-8) that the cry "may on occasion be construed as true repentance or as manipulation". We have already seen that the lack of reference to this cry at 2:16 was probably due to the desire to stress the motive of compassion on Yahweh's part. Here there is no clear indication of any repentance present.

V 9b,c is parallel to 2:16a and 18a with the "deliverer" taking the place of the "judge(s)" in a saving role, underlining once again the identification of the judges of 2:16-18 with the deliverers in the subsequent narratives.

The cry meets with an immediate response. Yahweh, his anger apparently assuaged, becomes assiduously active on Israel's behalf raising up a judge-deliverer. /20/

In v 10 we encounter the 'spirit of Yahweh' for the first time in the Book of Judges. The accession of or equipping with the Spirit (v 10a,b) is parallel to 2:18b which, however, only has the much more general "Yahweh was with the judge". This suggests that the 'spirit' is regarded as mediating the (abiding?) presence of Yahweh to Othniel.

Webb (127) considers this as a new element. It recurs at 6:34; 11:29; 13:25; 14:6, 19; 15:14; cf 9:23), though always with variations in the language used to describe it. It is not, however, found in the Ehud, Shamgar or Deborah/Barak narratives nor in the brief accounts of the so-called minor judges.

The subsequent description of the activity of the spirit-endowed Othniel as judging Israel /21/ parallels "he saved them" of 2:18 - again underlining and reinforcing the close connection between judging and saving; between the judge and the saviour/deliverer: the deliverer judged Israel and the judge delivered/ saved them (see above on v 9b,c).

Webb suggests that judging here should probably be taken to involve an element of proclamation as in 2:17. Somewhat similarly, Boling (83) tentatively offers the suggestion that the judge acted as a kind of cultic president perhaps presiding over a confessional re-affirmation of ultimate loyalties much in the manner of Samuel at the end of the period (cf 1 Sam 7). Although that is possible, there seems to be no clear indication of it in the present text. Neither is there any clear indication of judging in the sense of "seeking the will of Yahweh" as suggested by Thomson (78). The emphasis, instead, is very much on deliverance through military combat and victory. That this is so is further underlined when one notices that the words (one word in Hebrew) of v 9c "who delivered them" come at the very heart of vv 7-11.

The order, spirit - judged - war (v 10c), supports Boling's view (81) that špt has particular reference to the "mobilisation of Israel for a Yahwist war" (cf 6:34 and 11:29 where the troops are rallied in preparation for war). It should, however, be remembered that such mobilisation had a religious aspect (calling Israel back to undivided loyalty to Yahweh) as well as a military one (assembling a fighting force). This will be seen more particularly in later narratives where the sounding of the horn/ trumpet is mentioned (Cf also Mayes, 1985:77).

V 10d,e has parallels in 2:16, 18 and is also parallel to, and an explication of, v 9c above "he delivered them". The point is made that it is Yahweh who granted them victory and deliverance. "The human figure is simply the mode of Yahweh's deliverance" (so, Mullen, 193). The victory ushered in an era of peace. The land had rest (v 11a) for

forty years (most likely a round figure = one generation).
This is parallel to 2:18 "saved all the days of the judge".
The reference to the death of the judge in v 11b (see note
/21/) parallels 2:19. The implication here is that the
peace lasted the whole of Othniel's lifetime (cf 2:18).
/22/

It is clear from the above analysis that the Othniel
narrative consists largely of terminology and formulae we
have already met in the introduction. His story is "nothing
if not skeletal, with just a hint of flesh on the bones"
(so, Gunn, 1987:112). The only 'bits of flesh' are the
names of the judge and enemy and the period of subjugation,
and even these have been somewhat problematic, the
identification of the oppressor having proved difficult
/23/.

This has led many commentators (e.g., John L. Mackenzie, 9)
to conclude that the passage has been constructed
deliberately to head the list of the judges. That this is
undoubtedly so does not, however, mean that the passage is
entirely invented. De Vaux (1978:807), for example, thinks
that it may well preserve an historical memory; while
Soggin (47) warns that artificial narratives are often
distinguished by their exactitude, their historical
verisimilitude and the abundance of narrative elements -
precisely the opposite of what we find here.

Indeed the extensive re-employment of so much of the
phraseology of 2:11-19 suggests that Othniel is being
portrayed as the very embodiment of judgeship as laid down
in these verses. In him the generalisations of the
introduction are particularised and incarnated. He is a
paradigmatic-example, "a model judge-leader, a standard for
the judges that follow" (so, L.R. Klein, 34).

In v 9d he is identified in precisely the same terms as in
1:13 and also Joshua 15:17 /24/ and is, therefore, linked
with the "golden-age" of Joshua/ Caleb. He is of good
pedigree, being both a nephew and son-in-law of Caleb.

Moreover, his marriage to a true Israelite is exemplary (see note /16/). Further, he has already proved himself as a military leader. In addition, there appear to be no skeletons in his cupboard and no blots on his character.

He is portrayed as an ideal judge, an ideal which his successors fail to attain to, for we will discover in the ensuing narratives the same process of deterioration in the judges themselves as we have already noted in chapter 1 and also in 2:6-22. Polzin (1980:156) comments aptly, "it is almost as if the narrative immediately presents us with an example of what the coming story of the judges will not look like". Indeed, by the time we come to the last of the judges mentioned in this book - the incontinent Samson - we might well feel that we have reached the polar opposite of Othniel. /25/

The Spirit of Yahweh.

Since Othniel would appear to have been raised up as the first judge-saviour when the 'spirit of Yahweh' came upon him, the spirit might be regarded as the efficient cause in his calling.

However, we are given no details as to the mode of the spirit's coming upon Othniel. Neither is there any hint as to whether or not he or the people were aware of this happening. For lack of other evidence, perhaps, we are to assume that the public authenticating sign was the victory over the enemy. Whether any evidence of the spirit's coming was given prior to the battle, we are unable to ascertain in the present context - the whole account is extremely concise.

It would appear that one of the main functions of the spirit was to equip Othniel for the task(s) of judging Israel and leading her out to war.

As we have seen above, the judging certainly included the leading of Israel into battle against the enemy. Whether it

entailed anything more than that is not clear from the present context, but when taken in the larger context of the introduction it is likely that some hint of a more didactic function may be included here (see above on 2:17 and also p 57 on the religious dimension of the Holy or Yahweh War). If so, the spirit can be regarded as equipping Othniel for this task also.

However, the emphasis here is placed very much on the preparation for battle; the leading of Israel out to war against the enemy. For this, Othniel is equipped and empowered by the spirit. His own strength and already proven abilities were not sufficient. Typical of the Holy War, victory has to be seen as Yahweh's, not Othniel's.

There is no clear indication as to whether the spirit remained on Othniel or not. When we compare 2:18, however, it is possible that we are to regard the spirit as remaining "with the judge all his days", and mediating his abiding presence to Othniel.

[Neve's (26) suggestion that the spirit was meant as authentication here at the beginning of a new institution would seem to fall on the ground of its reappearance in the case of Gideon and Jephthah where the same argument would not hold.]

But not only does the accession of the spirit have significance for the judge/ deliverer. It is clear that it also marks a significant turning point in the disposition of Yahweh towards Israel - the period of his wrath is at an end; once again, in (seemingly immediate) response to their cry, Yahweh has turned towards his people in mercy and compassion. The spirit can therefore be said to be a sign of that mercy, a gift of Yahweh's compassion.

It can also be said that the spirit of Yahweh effects the victory (v 10d). It certainly initiates the process that leads to the victory and so to the re-establishment of

peace/ rest in the land (v 11a). The spirit is, therefore, the agent of deliverance and salvation.

The reference to the land in v 11a recalls the emphasis, made at crucial points in the introduction (1:2; 2:1. cf also 2:20-22), on the land as the covenant promise of Yahweh to his people. It is clear that in that wider context the intervention of the spirit of Yahweh brings the covenant promise of the land once more nearer to fulfilment. The promise, put into abeyance because of the anger of Yahweh against the evil of Israel, is once more put into effect, through the coming of the spirit upon Othniel. We might even say that through the coming of the spirit of Yahweh there is, certainly on Yahweh's part, a renewal of the covenant at whose heart is the promise of the land. /26/ This would seem to parallel one function of the spirit in the Numbers 11 passage, that of promoting the progress of the march towards the fulfilment of the promise of the land.

GIDEON - 6:1 - 8:35

Passing over the Ehud, Shamgar and Deborah/ Barak episodes in which the spirit is not mentioned we proceed to a consideration of the Gideon narrative where the spirit of Yahweh appears again in 6:34.

There is little doubt that the present Gideon narrative is the result of a complex literary history (so, e.g., Mayes, 1985:24). Despite Auld's (258ff) recent attempt to explain the narrative's many links with other biblical traditions by its lateness, the consensus of scholarly opinion would still regard the basic materials of the narrative as relatively early and as forming part of the basic collection of stories [Richter's 'Retterbuch' or 'Book of Saviours'] which was expanded and edited to form the present book of Judges (cf, e.g., Soggin 5ff). Our concern, however, is primarily with the final form of the text.

Once again the narrative begins with the first two elements of the repeating framework: the apostasy of Israel (6:1a) and the consequent experience of oppression at the hands of an enemy as a punishment from Yahweh (6:1b ff).

Israel's apostasy, not elaborated upon at this point as it was in the case of Othniel, is nevertheless explored much more fully throughout the remainder of the narrative than in any of the previous narratives (see vv 7-10 esp. v 10; vv 25-32 and 8:24-27). The form the oppression took is spelt out in greater detail than previously (vv 2b-6a). This time the enemy are the Midianites (vv 1,2,7) or, the Midianites, Amalekites and 'the people of the East' (v 3).

The third element of the framework - the cry/ appeal to Yahweh for help - follows in vv 6b and 7a. The repetition of "cried", rather than implying greater repentance on the part of the people (so, L.R. Klein, 50), underlines the distress experienced by Israel, since the apostasy remains (vv 25ff).

Yahweh's response was to send an unnamed prophet to the people of Israel (vv 8-10). He appears at precisely the same point as the prophetess Deborah in the previous narrative (4:4) but whereas Deborah brings the promise of immediate help from God and begins to set in motion the process of deliverance this prophet has come to indict the Israelites.

This is the first time in the actual narratives of the judges that the reason for the oppression is pointed out to the people of Israel themselves (as distinct from the readers): heedless of Yahweh's commandments they have paid 'reverence to the gods of the Amorites'. There is a certain similarity between this indictment and the message of the angel of the Lord in 2:1-5 [and most commentators see in both passages the hand of the Deuteronomist].

The fact that the cyclical pattern is not at this point proceeding predictably, suggests that this section is of

special significance in the present narrative, and so it turns out! At the close of the prophet's speech, it is not clear what the divine decision about Israel's future has been, but it does seem that, following Webb (145), we can interpret this as a sign that "Yahweh's frustration with Israel is beginning to show".

Nevertheless, with the appearance of the next element of the framework pattern in 6:11ff - the raising up of the judge-deliverer - it becomes apparent that Yahweh has determined to rescue Israel once again. The problem of Israel's apostasy (v 10), however, remains unresolved (as Webb (146) notes).

The comparatively long account of Gideon's call, which resembles that of Moses and of several of the prophets, is without parallel in the preceding episodes /27/ and again suggests significance. It would seem that the point being underlined here is that Gideon's future success as deliverer of Israel is going to be dependent not on any native strength or ability, but instead on Yahweh's presence with him (cf v 16; also 2:18b).

Although, Gideon is addressed by the angel as a "mighty man of valour" (gbwr hyl) (v 12; cf 11:1 of Jephthah) /28/, and is commissioned in the following terms (v 14): "Go in this might of yours (lk bkḥk zh) and deliver Israel ...", it is not clear from the text if this strength was present prior to - and therefore brought to light by - his calling, or if it was gifted (or at least promised) to him at this stage in the course of his calling. In view of Gideon's diffidence (v 15) and also the fact that he was a younger son this latter view is more likely - "such a man could not exercise leadership without a divine authentication of his call" (so, John L. Mackenzie, 131). /29/

Gideon's diffidence and self-deprecation draws attention to the fact that he is an unlikely choice to be a deliverer of the people, what Sternberg aptly calls 'a variation on the theme of the incongruous deliverer'. /30/ In terms of the

purpose of the narrative this holds true even if, as Soggin (120) notes, the theme of unworthiness is part of the stereotyped response made by the person called on the occasion of his calling. Its theological point is to give God absolute glory. Gideon's insignificance not only "underscores the freedom of divine choice" (so Jobling, 1986b:55) but also emphasises that his future success as deliverer of Israel is going to be wholly dependent on Yahweh's presence with him.

Significantly, the calling of Gideon to deliver Israel from the yoke of Midian is not followed immediately by the call to arms against the external enemy as we might expect (cf the Othniel, Ehud and Deborah/ Barak narratives), but rather with the call to battle against the enemy within, Baal (6:25ff). The altar of Baal is to be torn down, to be replaced by one to Yahweh.

The primary issue to be resolved here is not the military one (which has been in the forefront in the preceding narratives) but rather the religious one: the rivalry between Yahweh and Baal; and, in particular, the apostasy of Yahweh's people (which figures so prominently in chapter 2 of the introduction). Yahweh will not tolerate his people's easy syncretism.

It would appear from this section that part of Gideon's calling was to convert the people to pure Yahwism. This ^{define} would seem to underline what we saw in the introduction (2:17), that in addition to his military role the 'judge' had a further more didactic role in which he called the people back from idolatry and restored them to covenant loyalty to Yahweh, the evidence of which was to be obedience to his commandments (cf Boling, 139). This also has a bearing on what we saw at v 10 to be the unresolved problem of Israel's apostasy. It would appear that Yahweh now moves Gideon to bring about a resolution of this problem.

In v 32 Gideon emerges from the conflict with Baal as a hero. He is given a new name, Jerubbaal (meaning, "let Baal contend against him" (RSV)/ "let Baal prosecute him" (Boling, 129)), which marks him as a living proof of Baal's impotence. /31/

Having gained the victory for Yahweh over Baal in the religious arena, Gideon is now ready for a similar conflict with, and victory over, the external enemy in the military arena (6:33ff). The enemy, described as in v 3, makes another menacing approach (6:33) but the time is now ripe for Israel to resist and we read (v 34) that, "the spirit of Yahweh took possession of Gideon; and he sounded the trumpet, and the Abiezrites were called out to follow him."

כִּי־יָבִיֵאֵל

Here the spirit of Yahweh initiates the resistance movement in response to the new threat posed by the advancing enemy. It does so by 'taking possession' (RSV) of Gideon. The Hebrew verb here (lbš) is somewhat unusual, this being the only one of the seven 'spirit' texts in the Book of Judges in which it appears. /32/ It is the common word for 'put on (a garment)', 'wear', 'clothe' or 'be clothed with' (BDB, 528).

There seems to be some doubt amongst commentators as to whether the spirit clothed itself with Gideon, or Gideon was clothed with the spirit. Burney (203) identifies with the former view, "Gideon became as it were the spirit's incarnation". Likewise, C.A. Simpson (389), "the hero is made to be an embodiment of the spirit". They would appear to have the support of BDB (528) who use the idea of incarnation to translate lbš in Job 29:14.

On the other hand, Knight (37) suggests that, "Gideon wore upon himself the spirit of the living God"; also Koehler (12), "the spirit appears as a sphere which enwraps the recipient as a garment - it is as if the person were suddenly caught in an encompassing wind". Similarly, J. Gray (302) considers that the use of lbš here may imply recognition of Gideon's authority much as the distinctive

robes or armour of the king of Israel did (cf 1 Kings 22:10). This, of course, would only be obvious to the reader unless there was at the same time some visible and recognisable expression of the spirit's presence.

Whatever translation may be the more precise, there is little doubt that lb^y is used here to betoken 'complete possession' (so, Cundall, 108), although, as Wilson (1979: 325) points out, this does not necessarily imply an experience of trance or ecstasy. Clothed with, or possessed by, the spirit, Gideon becomes an instrument or tool of the spirit.

Neve's (20) claim that lb^y indicates the violence of the spirit possession ("the spirit seized Gideon to drive him on to his feats of military prowess") does not seem to be justified in the present context. There is no hint of any such violence, although the strong verb used may suggest that Gideon was conscious of the moment of endowment.

The endowment with the spirit is followed immediately by preparations for holy war. We are to understand that the spirit endowed Gideon with the might anticipated in vv 12-15 /33/ and also motivated him to sound the trumpet (cf Ehud, 3:27) and rally the tribal armies. His earlier diffidence (v 15) and fear (v 27) would appear to have dissipated (at least temporarily, cf 7:10).

There seems to be no weighty reason to infer (with Boling, 139) that Gideon over-reacted in vv 34b-35, or that the tactics he employed were not those of the spirit (contra Webb, 149) - particularly when one notes the use of the trumpets in the ensuing action and victory (7:22).

However, just when action is expected Gideon hesitates (vv 36ff). Despite the earlier promises, and in apparent unbelief /34/, he requires further assurance [rather than further proof of Yahweh's power as L.R. Klein (55) suggests] that Yahweh will indeed give him the promised

victory and so he suggests to God the (double) sign of the fleece.

Nonetheless, he goes on in chapter 7 to lead Israel to victory although the emphasis is very much on Yahweh's role in the victory. This is evident in the account of the cutting down of the 42,000 to 300 (vv 1-8), also in the fact that in the battle itself (vv 16-22) everything happens with virtually no human contribution, at least of a military kind. The victory is due to divine intervention and activity. /35/ This is one of the fundamental themes of the institution of the holy war. It is also one of the recurring themes in the narratives of the judges. /36/

In 8:3 Gideon's diplomatic skills are brought to the fore - skills which may also be attributed to his endowment with the spirit.

From this point (8:4) onward, however, it is a somewhat different Gideon who appears in his transjordanian campaign: "the coward becomes the bully" (so, L.R. Klein, 61). Holy war motifs are lacking and Gideon pursues his goals motivated by a desire for personal vendetta (vv 18-19) and dependent upon his own resourcefulness. Yahweh is notably absent, though Gideon uses his name in v 7 and, so, seems to assume that he is still with him. /37/

Playing on Gideon's two names, L.R. Klein (62) notes that Gideon "has become the 'contender' and 'hewer' of his own people". He is the first judge to turn his sword against his own compatriots (vv 16-17).

However, when offered dynastic rule [see further below p 76] he declined, recoiling from such impiety (vv 22-23). Jobling (1986b:67) and Gunn (1987:114) suggest that his request for material to make an ephod shows that he proceeds to act like a king. However, as Webb (152-3) points out, the request was a logical sequel to his assertion that Yahweh should rule Israel - Yahweh was to be enquired of. Nevertheless, the ephod became an object of

worship rather than enquiry and Gideon is implicated in the impiety (v 27b), Gunn (1987:114) describing him as "a potential apostate".

The return in 8:27 to his own city, Ophrah, is an example of ring composition which invites us to read the end of the story in the light of the beginning. Here at Ophrah the final irony /38/ of the story is enacted. Gideon, the champion of Yahweh against Baal, leads his people into a new kind of spiritual prostitution. The name Jerubbaal has acquired an ironic twist - Baal has indeed taken up his own cause (cf 6:31-32). "The present text uncompromisingly sees Gideon's action as apostasy" (so, Jobling, 1986b:140, n. 30).

At this point (v 28) two of the closing elements of the repeated framework appear, reminding us that one aspect of the initial crisis (Israel versus Midian) has been decisively resolved - Midian is subdued. And so we read - though for the final time in the Book of Judges - that "the land had rest".

However, the other and more fundamental aspect of the crisis (Israel versus Yahweh) has become more acute, for immediately after the death of the judge-deliverer is recorded (v 32), the cycle of apostasy begins once more. As before, the people return to their old faults, now rejecting Yahweh outright and making Baal-berith their god (v 33; cf 2:2 for Dtr's covenant concept). However, this time it is clear that the slide back to apostasy is well advanced before Gideon dies and he himself contributes to this regression by his own actions.

We saw in the deuteronomistic introduction (cf 2:16-19) that the judges were to be exemplary leaders life-long, able to keep Israel faithful to Yahweh. But, starting with Gideon the issue begins to arise of the faithless judge, who tends even to lead Israel into faithlessness. Gideon not only goes astray but leads Israel astray.

With the Gideon episode (and its sequel) the pattern of decline within the repeating pattern of successive episodes begins to come sharply into focus (cf. 2:16-19). "No judge from Gideon to Eli escapes some negative assessment" (so, Jobling, 1986b:60).

The Spirit of Yahweh

In contrast to Othniel, the spirit of Yahweh did not come upon Gideon at the time of his calling, but only after the problem of the people's idolatry had been dealt with, at least symbolically with the throwing down of the altar to Baal. For Gideon, the angel of Yahweh rather than the spirit of Yahweh (cf Othniel) is the efficient cause/ agent in his calling.

The spirit's coming is not viewed here as a direct and immediate response to the people's cry (as it was in 3:10), although, in the light of the prophetic indictment of 6:7-10, it is seen to be, even more than previously, a sign of Yahweh's mercy and compassion towards his undeserving people - a people who had in fact forfeited any right to his help - and of his decision to save them yet again.

As in the case of Othniel, the coming of the spirit upon Gideon was the first clear sign to Israel in general, as distinct from Gideon himself, that Yahweh was indeed turning again towards his people. What had been clarified for Gideon in the course of his call, now becomes apparent to all Israel.

Here, the spirit's coming was occasioned by the fresh threat posed by the advance of the oppressor/ enemy (6:33) and we are perhaps to regard the appearance of the spirit at this precise point as Yahweh's response of anger to this fresh initiative on the part of the intruder/ oppressor, who encamps on Israelite soil. The spirit of Yahweh initiates the resistance movement.

The immediate effect of the spirit's coming was to move Gideon to sound the trumpet and rally the troops to prepare to counter this latest enemy threat. Here, as in the Othniel narrative, the emphasis is very much on the spirit motivating the judge to, and preparing him for, war, although the whole affair is more protracted here than in chapter 3. The spirit appears to have been instrumental in removing Gideon's former diffidence, hesitancy and fear - at least momentarily.

In view of the foreshadowing of the trumpets of 7:22 in 6:34 we may be justified in once more attributing the victory in battle to the spirit of Yahweh. The spirit is certainly regarded as initiating the process that led to the victory, to the overthrow of the oppressor and to the re-establishing of peace in the land. As in Othniel's case, we might say that through the coming of the spirit there is a re-implementation of the covenant promises, especially concerning the possession of the land. The spirit is the agent of deliverance and salvation.

In that Gideon's judgeship also involved him in more religious functions [e.g. both the rejection of idolatry (6:25ff) and the encouraging of Yahwism (8:27)] we might think of the spirit as equipping him for these also. However, this is not so evident since the casting down of the altar to Baal took place prior to his investment with the spirit while the ephod incident only led to further apostasy rather than to greater loyalty to Yahweh. ✓

At 8:3 we noted Gideon's diplomatic skills in action. It is just possible that this can be regarded as another effect of the spirit's work in his life.

However, the spirit of Yahweh certainly did not stop him from acting like an oppressor (and worse) towards Succoth and Penuel; pursuing a vendetta against the two kings (8:21); leading the people into idolatry (8:24-27); and having a foreign concubine (8:31, contrast 3:6 and the

example of Othniel). It is clear that the moral influence of the spirit at this stage in Israel's history is limited. non-resistant

We have no clear indication as to the mode of the spirit's coming or as to whether either Gideon or the people were in any way conscious or aware of what was happening. The use of the strong word lbš would seem to suggest that Gideon could well have had some consciousness of what was taking place, as does also the apparent, although possibly temporary, overcoming of his former, natural fear and diffidence.

It is not obvious if the spirit remained upon or with Gideon all his days or not. His gradually deteriorating personal behaviour and the decreasing incidence of reference to Yahweh as the narrative continues would tend to tell against the continuing influence of the spirit, or at the very least point to a decreasing influence [see also note /37/]. However, there is no explicit reference to Yahweh leaving Gideon (contrast 16:20, of Samson). is the spirit then a substantial one? can be diminished?

ABIMELECH - 9:1-57

The Gideon narrative is followed in chapter 9 by that of his son Abimelech. Although no mention is made of the spirit of Yahweh in this chapter, our interest is drawn by the reference to the '**evil spirit**' sent from God between Abimelech and the men of Shechem (v 23). This is the first reference in the Hebrew Bible to such a phenomenon and one whose significance we now consider.

If we regard 8:32, with its mention of Gideon's death and burial place, as the end of the Gideon narrative, we would expect the next narrative to begin with a mention of Israel's continuing apostasy and this is, in fact, what we find in 8:33 - Israel returns to playing the harlot. However, the set wording of the framework pattern that we have come to expect (cf. 2:11; 3:7,15; 4:1 and 6:1) is missing. The same is true of the other elements of the

pattern that we have come to expect - they are all missing.
/39/

Clearly, Abimelech does not follow the pattern set down in chapter 2 and is not to be regarded as one of the judges whom "Yahweh raised up" (2:16). Indeed, significantly, Yahweh is completely absent from the chapter - the only chapter in the Book of Judges of which this is true.

Rather than being Yahweh's judge-deliverer Abimelech appears at certain points almost in the same capacity as the oppressors in the previous narratives. Indeed, Malamat (1976:163) suggests that Abimelech provides us with a model of an **anti-judge/deliverer**, at all points antithetical to the genuine judges and showing diametrically opposed traits
/40/.

He has already been introduced to us in 8:31 as the product of Gideon's liaison with "his concubine who was in Shechem". We are clearly intended to read this and the ensuing narrative (in which the negative effects of this union for Israel are highlighted) in the light of 3:6 and also Othniel's exemplary choice of wife. "Gideon literally plants the seed for the most devastating chapter within the narrative sequence" (so, L.R. Klein, 69). The resultant fruit from this 'seed' turned out to be a fighter exemplifying "all the negative aspects of his father merged with his mother's non-Yahwist beliefs" (L.R. Klein, 70).

In v 2 it would appear that Gideon's sons exercised some kind of authority which provoked discontent in the non-Israelite city-state of Shechem. Abimelech /41/, playing on this hereditary principle /42/, which he assumes, and on his own kinship to the men of Shechem, gathered sufficient support to enable him to slay his half-brothers, following which he was installed as the king of Shechem. The root mlk is used here in v 6. (In v 22, however, we find the unusual root śwr.) /43/

Jotham, the only half-brother to have escaped slaughter, appears on the scene in v 7 to confront the men of Shechem with the evil they have done. He adapts a fable to his purpose. "His voice coincides in a special way with the voice of the narrator" (so, Polzin, 1980:174).

However, the main thrust of his speech is not the fable but the application (vv 16-21). The central charge is that they have not dealt truly and sincerely with Jerubbaal (v 16; cf 8:35). Consequently a mutually destructive process will be effected between Abimelech and the men of Shechem (Cf v 20 whose words amount to a curse). Jobling (1986b: 75) comments, "the general point common to fable and application is clear enough: 'May this whole monarchical experiment blow up in your faces!'"

Having noted Abimelech's three year rule over Israel, the narrator goes on to show how the words of Jotham were fulfilled in the divine action which followed (v 23), "God sent an evil spirit ...". It is stressed at this point that God's purpose here was one of retribution (v 24). This is further underlined at the close of the whole episode in vv 56-57. Indeed retribution might be said to be the key theme of this chapter.

There is a sense in which v 23 parallels the other spirit texts of the Book of Judges, in that the spirit is clearly regarded as the initiator of the process which broke Abimelech's oppressive rule over Israel. It is, therefore, unlikely that here it refers to a "bad temper" as, for example, Briggs (135) suggests.

And yet on other accounts it is so very different:

(i) The description of the spirit as evil is unique in Judges, though it does appear elsewhere in the OT (cf, e.g., 1 Sam 16:14; 18:10; 1 Kings 22:21).

(ii) Although the spirit is said to have been sent by God and is, therefore, under his control, it is not identified

with him or directly related to him as is the 'spirit of Yahweh' in each of the other spirit texts [We might compare the use of "wind" in Num 11].

Interestingly the name for the deity here is 'lhym and not yhwh. Indeed, as we have noted, this present chapter is the only one in the Book of Judges in which the name Yahweh does not appear, suggesting (again) that the rise of Abimelech, unlike that of (the rest of) the judges, was altogether independent of Yahweh, and merely the result of personal, political manoeuvring. Polzin (1980:173) describes this absence of Yahweh's name as a "sign of negativity".

(iii) Here the spirit does not come upon or associate itself with any one individual as in the case of the judges, but rather interposes itself between two parties.

This appears to be the sense in which the spirit is 'evil' - it creates disharmony between these parties, moving the men of Shechem to deal treacherously with Abimelech, etc. (cf, e.g., J. Gray, 321). Martin (123) notes that in early Israelite thinking God was believed to be the source of both the good and the evil that came to man. Only in later times was the evil thought of as originating from a figure who was completely independent of God and to whom the name 'Satan' was given (compare 2 Sam 24:1 with 1 Chr 21:1).

(iv) Whereas the spirit of Yahweh is regarded as the agent of deliverance and salvation, here the 'evil spirit', what Webb (159) calls 'the dark counterpart of the spirit of Yahweh', is clearly the agent of retribution (v 24), responsible for setting the whole process of retribution in motion.

From v 24 onwards this process of retribution is worked out with almost mathematical precision, act answering to act, evil to evil (vv 1-2 -> vv 26-28; v 25 -> v 34; and finally vv 5, 18 -> v 54). Even the 'evil spirit' itself answers to the 'evil' ('crime', RSV) committed by Abimelech and the

men of Shechem (vv 56-57) and "is not exorcised until the chief instigator of evil is struck down" (so, Webb, 154).

This process of exact retribution in the Abimelech story is an aberration from the alternating pattern of punishment and rescue in successive stories of the saviour-judges. In these stories God (as Yahweh) has operated on a different principle: punishment tempered by compassion with compassion having the final say in each episode. [We might compare Yahweh's dealings with the 'craving people' in Num 11.]

It is a reminder [as Webb (159) notes] that God has a different principle of operation he can invoke at his discretion and if it can be invoked against Abimelech and the men of Shechem why not against Israel in general and if against unfaithfulness in one sphere why not in the other? An ominous note is sounded in a deteriorating situation.

With the death of Abimelech the attempt to institute the monarchy - or protomonarchy, as Jobling prefers to call it - in Israel was over, "they departed every man to his home" (v 55). Abimelech had no heirs to even attempt to pursue his experiment.

It is clear that Abimelech's reign is judged negatively. But this does not seem to be the only view of kingship expressed in the Book of Judges.

We have already noted (p 48 above), the positive way in which certain texts in Judges 17-20 (e.g., 17:6; 21:25) look forward to the monarchy. But even in the present context of the Gideon-Abimelech episode various monarchical 'clues' have been strewn about. We might note, for example, the mention of the names Joash, Jotham - which are names of future kings of Israel (2 Kgs 11-14, 15:32-38) - and Abimelech = 'my father is king'; and the royal theme in 8:18-21 where Gideon's family is said to have the physical characteristics of kings. In addition there is little doubt that the end of Gideon's career receives a decidedly

monarchical cast. Soggin (159) sees in the family data of 8:30-31 an indication of Gideon's 'regal character', while Webb (221) notes that, "Gideon did become a dynast, in fact if not in name". This is borne out both by the fact that his seventy sons seem to have exercised some form of rule, as well as by Abimelech's name!

Furthermore, we should note, with Jobling (1986b:68), the unexpected feature in 8:35 when Israel is blamed for not showing kindness to the family of Gideon. The syntax seems to imply that this failure was part of Israel's apostasy, and would in turn at least leave open the possibility that some form of hereditary rule was regarded as legitimate. Moreover, although Abimelech's reign is undoubtedly judged negatively, this would appear to be on account of his fratricide and other misdeeds, and on account of his illegitimacy, rather than on any anti-monarchical principle (e.g. Mayes, 1985:26).

On the other hand, however, there are strong anti-monarchical tendencies in the Book of Judges. Cushan-rishathaim the first king mentioned in Judges (cf 3:8, 10) is also the first oppressor of Israel! Though his identification has proved difficult [see note /24/], it is widely assumed that his name is significant, meaning something like 'Cushan-of-double-wickedness' (so, e.g., de Vaux, 1978:807). Webb (128) goes further and regards Cushan as the embodiment of kingship, and as such an instrument of Yahweh's judgement. Both Gideon in his transjordanian campaign (8:4ff) and Abimelech manifested these negative, oppressive and 'wicked' traits of 'kingship' in their dealings with some sections of Israel.

In addition, we might note Gideon's refusal of the people's offer of kingship or rather hereditary 'rule' (8:23) on the grounds that human monarchy impugns that of Yahweh; the anti-monarchical tenor of Jotham's fable, Jotham being spokesman for the narrator; the absence of any monarchical claim on behalf of Jotham, though he is logically the legitimate heir; and perhaps above all, the fact that this

monarchy - despite the intrinsic continuity of monarchy - comes to an end.

What we find then in Judges, as, indeed, elsewhere in the Deuteronomistic History, is a somewhat ambivalent attitude to the monarchy. The recent trend has been to treat the tension redaction-critically, identifying an earlier and pro-monarchical (DtrG) and a later and anti-monarchical (DtrN) version of the DtrH. Such treatment, however, cannot avoid the problem of why the final form of the text brings together such apparently opposed points of view.

Buber (1967:83) speaks of a deliberate editorial balancing of points of view; while in Webb's (228-9) view, the DtrH is neither pro-monarchic nor anti-monarchic. This is entirely in keeping with Deuteronomy 17:14-20 which, far from being negative to kingship, merely sets stringent limits on it.

Jobling (1986b:87) comes to a somewhat different conclusion: "It lets monarchy be seen for good and bad, and judgeship for good and bad; it also (though not very clearly) lets other possibilities be seen /44/. Out of these elements, Israel is free to create its 'political theology'!" [See further pp 108ff below].

JEPHTHAH - 10:6-12:7 /45/

At 10:6 we are returned once again to the familiar framework pattern, the first three elements of which appear in: v 6a, Israel's apostasy; v 7, Yahweh's response of anger bringing about the oppression of Israel by an enemy; and v 10, the people's cry to Yahweh. There is, however, a radical modification of the old pattern /46/, and as a whole it "gives expression to a theology much more explicitly developed than anything found in the earlier framework passages" (so, Mayes, 1985:28):

(a) In v 6 the extent of the apostasy is elaborated to boundaries hitherto unknown, with the addition of five

specific foreign gods. This again is consistent with the insistence in the introduction on the downward spiral into sin and apostasy (2:19). Yahweh's word (2:3) is being realised.

(b) The mention of the Philistines alongside the Ammonites (v 7) prepares us for chapters 13-16 to which the Philistine oppression forms the background. As we shall see, the judgeship of Jephthah was less than completely successful. He delivered from the Ammonites only. The Philistine oppression remained for Samson to handle.

(c) The cry to Yahweh, though triggered as in previous episodes by the political crisis, is presented as one of repentance (vv 10, 16). This is the first, and only, clear reference to this in any of the judges' narratives (so, Mullen, 197; Polzin, 1980:176). We will see that the nature of this repentance becomes clearer as the narrative develops.

Following on the cry, Yahweh enters into dialogue with the people (vv 11-16) in which he indicts them for their continuing apostasy despite his repeated acts of deliverance. This would seem to be parallel to the prophetic indictment of Israel in the Gideon narrative (6:7-10; cf also 2:20). Here, however, things are taken a step further. At 6:10 we noted that it was not clear what the divine decision about Israel's future had been. Here, Yahweh makes it abundantly clear that there is to be no further deliverance (v 13).

Israel's response (v 15) was to repeat and elaborate on its cry of repentance. In addition to the confession of sin (v 15b) there was added a note of submission (v 15c) followed by an appeal for immediate help (v 15d) /47/ and acts indicative of repentance and renewed loyalty to Yahweh (v 16a).

There follows an interpretative crux at the end of v 16: "and he became indignant over the misery of Israel (RSV)".

Are we to understand these words as implying Yahweh's acceptance of Israel's repentance? If so, what are we to make of his assertion in v 13 that he would never again deliver Israel?

Many scholars do in fact understand v 16 in this way. On this reading of the text the scenario is parallel to that of Jonah 3:10 (et al) where we find 'God repenting of the evil which he had said he would do to them'.

However, Webb and Mullen argue that this does not take sufficient account of the content of Yahweh's speech in vv 11b-14b nor of the precise terms of the response in v 16c. Webb (46) thinks Yahweh's interjection (vv 11-14) already anticipates the putting away of the foreign gods as an expected accompaniment of the appeal for help, and rejects both! Yahweh recognises the purely utilitarian nature of their "cry" and confronts them with it. Though the cry has the accoutrements of repentance it is not accepted at face value by Yahweh.

Mullen (198) follows Polzin's suggestion (1980:177) that C_{m1} (v 16c) refers to Israel's troubled efforts to persuade Yahweh to help them. Webb prefers to see the reference more widely to the general misery of Israel (one element of which would certainly be its rejected importunity).

In view of the tension we have noted already in the related passages (2:1-5; 2:20-22; and 6:7-10) it would seem preferable to follow Webb here. Once again Yahweh is faced with a dilemma. We might even say that there appears to be an emotional conflict within him. He is angered by the people's apostasy and unable to accept their repentance because of its transitoriness. Affronted by Israel's attempts to use him, Yahweh rebuffs their appeal but finds their continued misery unendurable (cf Hosea 5:15-6:6). Deliverance has been refused and yet there is just the hint that Yahweh will not allow things to continue much longer as they are.

However, when the Ammonites renew their attack against Gilead (vv 17-18) it is still leaderless. No judge-saviour has yet emerged to challenge the oppressors. Israel's plight requires solution and the story of Jephthah attempts to provide that - at least partially.

The appointment of Jephthah (10:17-11:11) /48/ seems to take the place of the fourth element of the expected framework - the raising up of the judge-deliverer by Yahweh; only here, Yahweh has retired into the background. He is not even enquired of by the leaders of Gilead as they consider who should be their head (r'š) to lead them into battle (contrast 1:1!). It would appear that the ensuing actions up to 11:29 are solely determined by the people (so, L.R. Klein, 86). Jobling (1986b:54) suggests that the reason for the lack of divine choice here is either due to the fact that Jephthah is a minor judge (and minor judges do not arise on divine initiative) and/ or one more marker of the gradual 'fall' from the ideal of the judge cycle. In terms of the final form of the text, the latter view is preferable.

Jephthah is introduced to us in a flashback in 11:1-3. He is in many ways an unlikely candidate to liberate Israel /49/: the son of a harlot, disinherited by his brothers, forced to live in exile in the land of Tob, he was a brigand. Mullen's (198) remark that his personal situation paralleled that of the nation he led, is somewhat forced (although it may have a measure of truth in it [cf Samson]). He is, however, introduced to us also as a gbwr hyl in a double sense - a warrior and a man with considerable resources at his disposal (cf Gideon, 6:12).

The main story line is resumed at v 4. With the military situation now critical, the elders of Gilead take matters into their own hands. They fetch Jephthah and offer him leadership (qsyn) of the army. Jephthah, however, rejects this offer and enters into negotiations with the elders until he is assured of the seemingly more permanent position as head (r'š) over all the inhabitants of Gilead.

From the beginning Jephthah is seen to be a shrewd and skilful negotiator and also a calculating opportunist pursuing his own personal ambitions.

He would however appear to be a Yahwist. Certainly it is on his lips that Yahweh re-enters the story (v 9). Moreover he seems to have solemnised the pledges given and taken by means of a visit to the sanctuary (v 11) (so, Soggin, 208) /50/. By invoking Yahweh (v 9) Jephthah elevates victory to the status of divine endorsement of himself and so further enhances his own authority vis-a-vis the elders. His arrival at Mizpah (v 11) answers the question that was asked there in 10:18.

In relation to the context of the Jephthah narrative as a whole we note with interest in v 8b the elders claim to have returned (šwb) to Jephthah. They adopt the language of repentance, but this is clearly a utilitarian and politically motivated repentance, and may suggest a similar characteristic in Israel's own repentance in 10:10-16.

In line with ancient precedent Jephthah sends messengers with a brief verbal challenge to the enemy king (11:12-28). His diplomatic skills are much in evidence here.

Despite these diplomatic skills, however, deadlock is reached and a higher authority must now decide (v 27) /51/. Jephthah's appeal to Yahweh to decide "this day" is in effect a declaration of war (so, Webb, 56). It may be that the description of Yahweh as 'Judge' is meant to inform our reading of the use of the term in the remainder of the book.

The coming of the spirit of Yahweh upon Jephthah (11:29) initiates a sequence familiar from the career of the first judge /52/. This is underlined by the four-fold repetition of cbd in vv 29b-32a, which provides a clear link between Jephthah's endowment with the spirit (v 29a) and the Yahweh-given victory (v 32). Yahweh's spirit is, thus, seen to be the motive force in this one movement.

At the same time, it would appear that Jephthah's tour of Gilead and Manasseh is connected in some way with his preparations for battle. It is parallel to Gideon's call-up of volunteers from various tribes (6:34-35) and Othniel's judging of Israel. Its purpose is to show Jephthah as leader and to call up reinforcements (cf 12:2).

The spirit clearly effected the victory and Israel's deliverance. Ammon was subdued (v 32b).

But what are we to make of the relationship between the deliverance from Ammon (11:32) and the vow not to deliver (10:13)? Mullen (198) suggests that the answer lies in the earlier mention of the Philistines (10:7). Yahweh had not completely broken his vow. Israel was not yet fully delivered, but still under the oppression of the Philistines (who appear as the oppressors in the Samson narratives).

Though this is undoubtedly true, the answer must also lie in part with the very nature of Yahweh's involvement with Israel. It is a deeply personal and emotional involvement, not just merely formal and legal. In the final analysis it is not governed by abstract principles of reward and punishment, justice and retribution (contrast ch 9). Yahweh saves Israel under protest. He is angry at its apostasy and affronted at its inadequate repentance yet he cannot tolerate its continued misery - he cannot simply leave it to its fate. He intervenes briefly to relieve Israel of the Ammonite yoke (so, Webb, 75). *sounds like Y is coming forward, ambivalent & moody!*

In vv 30-31, the spirit-motivated movement towards victory is interrupted by Jephthah's vow which becomes the focal point of the narrative until it is resolved in v 39. This vow appears in a parallel position to Gideon's request for a sign to assure him of victory in battle (6:36-40). God gave Gideon that sign but here Jephthah does not wait for an answer. Indeed, he does not give Yahweh any opportunity to answer.

It is one of the significant features of this narrative that after Yahweh's indictment and seeming rejection of Israel in 10:13-14, his voice is not heard again (contrast Gideon 6:11-16, 25; 7:2,7,9). He remains silent although it becomes clear that he does intend to deliver Israel one more time. /53/

The emphatic infinitive "if you will indeed give" (v 30) expresses Jephthah's insecurity - will Yahweh after all reject him? To secure Yahweh's help Jephthah resorts to bribery. His vow is not rash or impulsive as some have argued, but characteristically shrewd and calculating. It appears to be similar in character to the utilitarian and politically motivated repentance of Israel (10:10-16) (see also the similar 'turning towards' Jephthah on the part of the elders, 11:8, above, p 81). Jephthah like Israel has debased religion into politics (so, Webb, 74). And yet despite that - and not as a consequence! - Yahweh comes to the aid of Israel.

This attempt at bribery seems to suggest that Jephthah has no awareness that Yahweh's spirit has already come upon him or that the divine judge has already decided to save Israel by his hand. Unlike Gideon he has had no verbal confirmation of this from Yahweh either immediately or through a mediator. From Jephthah's point of view Yahweh is still aloof and uncommitted (so, Webb, 66). Jephthah has already become Yahweh's instrument without being aware of it. We watch from a vantage point he does not share as he takes extreme measures to secure divine help which has already been granted to him. /54/

From the terminology used it is clear that Jephthah intended a human sacrifice (cf Num 30:2ff) (so, Soggin, 215). Mullen (199) notes that the vow was a direct violation of Deuteronomic law (Deut 12:29-31), while L.R. Klein (95) comments, "he may have been a devoted Yahwist but ironically he includes aspects of heathen worship in his concept of Yahwism" [cf also note /50/]. His calculated

risk went tragically wrong when returning from battle he was met by his only daughter (v 34).

A further break with the expected pattern is found at this point, for no mention is made of any peace being restored to the land. Instead, civil war with Ephraim ensues (12:1-6). /55/ Webb (72) notes that this battle is not presented as a holy war but with wry humour as a rather squalid tit-for-tat tribal feud. He remarks further that it is part of a thematic development (progressive internal disintegration) which reaches its climax in the civil war involving the whole of Israel at the end of the book (chapters 19-21) (cf also Jobling, 1986b:60).

The narrative closes with the final element of the recurring pattern, an account of the death (and burial) of the judge (12:7).

Spirit of Yahweh

The spirit functions in this narrative in much the same way as in the Othniel and Gideon narratives - principally by preparing Israel for warfare against the oppressor and by effecting the victory and Israel's deliverance. The same verb is used to describe the accession of the spirit as was the case with Othniel.

Unlike the Othniel and Gideon narratives, however, the coming of the spirit here is the very first indication in the account that Yahweh is in fact going to come to Israel's aid. Jephthah received no divine calling. He is the elders' choice and comes to leadership through a lengthy period of negotiations in which his own personal interests and ambitions appear to have been uppermost in his mind. Indeed, although Yahweh by the donation of his spirit graciously "ratifies" (so, Boling, 207) the elders' choice of man as judge-deliverer, nowhere is there any other indication that Jephthah has his approval.

It is clear from 10:10-16 that the accession of the spirit was not deserved or even given as a result of Israel's repentance. Rather it is one further instance of the longsuffering mercy and compassion of Yahweh.

The references to the "possession of the land" in 11:12-26 remind us of the promise of the land (1:2; 2:2-3). Because of the intervention of the spirit the promise of land is once more re-implemented. However, there is no mention of peace in the land at the close of this episode. This is because the Philistine threat remains. Jephthah's judgeship cannot, therefore, be said to have been completely successful.

Although the coming of the spirit must have been a sign to Israel of Yahweh's continuing mercy, Yahweh's otherwise total silence is not a good omen. The communication between Israel and Yahweh (and vice versa) is becoming virtually non-existent, another sign of the deterioration that has taken place (contrast 1:1-2).

It is even less clear here than in the case of Gideon whether Jephthah was aware of the spirit upon him. He did not seem to be.

The spirit certainly did not stop him from making the vow which was in itself a breach of the deuteronomic law and which led to the tragic sacrifice of his only daughter.

Although the victory is attributed to Yahweh (through his spirit), it would appear that Jephthah has relied on his own natural abilities rather than divine enabling.

SAMSON 13:1-16:31

In 13:1 the first two elements of the framework - apostasy and oppression as punishment - are present without being developed which, with other clues, has led many commentators to conclude that the Samson narrative is a

later accretion to the 'Book of Deliverers' (e.g., Mayes, 1985:29) /56/.

Whatever the history of the tradition which has gone to make up the present narrative may be, we can agree with Wharton (50) that the "introductory formula tells us unmistakably that the editors expect the Samson stories to be heard under the theological rubric for the entire period, provided in 2:6ff". This would be as true of the spirit texts as of the rest of the narrative.

The oppressors are now the Philistines, already anticipated in the Jephthah narrative (10:7). Significantly, the duration of the oppression (40 years) is the longest recorded and looks similar to the earlier round figures detailing the duration of peace (= one generation. Cf 3:11). Despite the oppression, however, the people do not cry to Yahweh - either for help or in repentance. Indeed, as we shall see (cf 15:11ff), Israel shows little sign of wanting to be rescued. Nevertheless, Yahweh is once again in his mercy intent on delivering Israel (v 5).

In vv 2ff the third element in the framework is recorded for us, the raising up of the deliverer-judge by Yahweh. His birth is intimated to his parents by the angel of Yahweh whose approach appears to have been unsolicited - a further token of Yahweh's mercy. This incident recalls the similar promise to Abraham and Sarah (Gen 18) and may be intended to stress the continuation of the covenant relationship and promise. It certainly leads us to expect a judge worthy of his calling (a second Othniel, perhaps?). And, indeed, unlike most of the other judges who are portrayed as in some measure disadvantaged, Samson begins with every advantage. He is born into a pious Israelite family, and even his birth involves some degree of wonder (vv 18-19). Indeed, the whole of chapter 13 is full of promise, anticipation and expectation - soon, however, to be reversed in the ensuing narrative.

It is clear that the child is to be a Nazirite to God from birth (vv 4ff) /57/, and it may be that, in this as in other areas of his life, we are meant to regard Samson as symbolising Israel /58/. Wenham (47) comments: "his uncut locks reminding himself and others that total dedication to God's service was the calling of all Israel".

In common with the foregoing judges, the child's task was to be one of deliverance (v 5), "he shall begin to deliver". However, the word "begin" intimates from the outset that Samson will not enjoy the same success as the other judges. "An ultimate victory over the Philistines is not promised" (so, Exum 1983:35). Certainly, Samson wrought havoc on the Philistines but there is no indication that he led Israel to victory over them. Indeed, the Philistines continue to dominate Israel at the beginning of 1 Samuel, the next book in the Deuteronomistic History. It would appear that Yahweh's vow of 10:13 is not completely broken! ?

In fulfilment of the promise, Samson is born (v 24). We are told that he "grew and Yahweh blessed him". The blessing would seem to have consisted of the spirit of Yahweh (v 25) which "began to stir him in Mahaneh-dan, between Zorah and Eshtaol /59/."

Although the Nazirite begins in Samson at the moment he is conceived, the spirit takes possession of his person sometime later /60/, at what J. Gray (346) calls the "active beginning of Samson's life's work". The particular word used to describe the initial activity of the spirit in the life of Samson, p^cm ('stir'), is found in only four other places in the OT (Gen 41:8; Ps 77:5; and Dan 2:1, 3). BDB (821) translates "began to impel" in the Qal (as here) and "be disturbed" in the Niph^cal (Gen 41:8; Ps 77:5; Dan 2:3) and Hithpa^cēl (Dan 2:1). Neve (20) takes it to mean "a troubling of the spirit, an uneasiness which presages the violent acts of physical courage which are to follow". (The Genesis and Daniel references are to men whose spirits are disturbed by dreams.) Soggin (236) suggests the translation 'agitate' and thinks that we probably have here

a reference to the ecstatic phenomena connected with the possession of the divine spirit (similarly, Baumgartel, 366). Burney too (353) speaks of "a sudden access of frenzy". If so, this would be the first indication of anything in the experience of the judges similar to the phenomenon recorded in the Numbers 11 passage. However, no further explication is given, and we find ourselves echoing Crenshaw (1974:478), "What we would give to know the particulars of the initial stirrings of the spirit of Yahweh!" ✓

The present text does not enable us to say whether Samson was aware of the infusion of the spirit taking place or not, though Vickery (58) thinks he was "infused unawares".

Once again the word "began" (cf v 5) is emphasised. This may suggest the beginning of a continuing process or, in view of the events of chapters 14 and 15, the first of numerous experiences of the spirit. Perhaps these two suggestions are not incompatible. Whatever may be the case, the link with v 5 suggests the spirit's role in the deliverance of Israel.

The action begins in 14:1 with Samson going down to Timnath and having become infatuated with a Philistine girl, wanting her as his wife. His parents, being devout Yahwists were concerned about this choice of a wife from amongst the uncircumcised Philistines. In view of the fact that such intermarriage 'outside the faith' was regarded as being a part of the apostasy into which Israel often fell (cf 3:6), their displeasure was very understandable.

It is not clear if we are to regard v 1 as an immediate consequence of the stirring of the spirit in 13:25, but the narrator certainly makes it abundantly clear in v 4 that Samson's choice at this stage was "from Yahweh" who was in fact "seeking an occasion against the Philistines" (when no-one else, including Samson, seemed to be!). This would tell against Crenshaw's (1974:480) view that here we find polemic against the intermarriage of Israelite and

Philistine [although this may have been at least part of the intention of the tradition in an earlier context].

It is not immediately apparent in what sense his request was "from Yahweh". It may be that we are to think of Yahweh (or his spirit?) actually stirring or inciting Samson into making this choice. But, since this seems to be a clear example of what is condemned in 3:6, perhaps we should instead think of Yahweh as over-ruling in Samson's carnal choice of wife (We might compare Yahweh's gracious ratification of the elder's choice of Jephthah in the previous narrative). As L.R. Klein (117) comments, "sometimes man accomplishes Yahweh's will unwittingly and the divine purpose is realised as a consequence of man's unethical actions". [On the other hand, in the three remaining spirit texts (14:6, 19 and 15:14) the spirit clearly moves Samson to act in ways that violate the part of the Nazirite rule which prohibited their touching corpses.]

Several commentators point to the importance of the 'ignorance' of Samson's parents in v 4 (cf also 13:16) and regard it as evidence of "Yahweh's secret operation", his secret purpose with Samson. Others, like Wharton (58), go further and consider that Samson was equally unaware, "Yahweh is underway in the world to free his people from Philistine tyranny, though not a soul in the story knows it" /61/. Although this is not explicit in 14:4, it may well be so and could possibly be suggested by 16:20 where we are told of Samson's ignorance of the fact that Yahweh had left him. Whether or not he or others were aware of it, v 4 makes the point that Yahweh is at work in Samson's career.

Having just reached Timnath, a young lion roared against him, at which point (v 6) the "spirit of Yahweh came mightily upon (slh) him". Here we are pointed to what Wharton (56) calls "the secret behind all the riddling". It was the spirit of Yahweh, moving in Samson against the Philistines, which empowered him to kill the lion.

The verb slh also appears in the final two spirit texts in Judges, 14:19 and 15:14 (cf 1 Sam 10:6, 10; 11:6; 16:13; 18:10 [evil spirit]). The root means "to rush", especially "of sudden possession by the spirit" (BDB, 852). Neve's suggestion (20) that it indicates a violent manifestation of the spirit's presence is supported by J. Gray's (348) graphic description, "the spirit 'leapt upon him', as a lion on its prey".

What stimulated the spirit here was the challenge or threat presented by a young lion which "roared against" Samson. Moore (331) describes the coming of the spirit as "an access of divine rage". However, there is no mention of anger, either divine or human in this verse, as there is in 14:19.

It would appear that the spirit endued Samson with extraordinary and irresistible physical strength (so, Cundall, 163), which enabled him to dispose of the menacing threat with extreme ease (a sign of things to come!). However, it may be that the spirit only gave the stimulus to the strength that he already possessed as a Nazirite.
/62/

We are to regard this incident of the tearing of the lion with his bare hands "not simply as a strongman act but as part of Yahweh's overall plan to free his people from Philistine oppression" (so, Martin, 165). It sets off a chain reaction which leads via the riddle and resulting feud with the Philistines to the slaughter at Ramath-lehi (15:14-17) - where we might say Yahweh got what he was seeking in v 4!

Immediately after the incident with the lion, we have a record of a wedding scene (14:10ff) at which Samson poses a riddle for the young men of the village - a riddle whose interpretation is tied up with the tearing of the lion and its subsequent issue /63/. The riddle is solved by them through the untiring enticements of his wife, whose life and family had been threatened.

"If you had not ploughed with my heifer, you would not have found out my riddle", was Samson's reply. At which point we go on to read that (v 19) "the spirit of Yahweh came mightily upon him ..."

This accession of the spirit is described in exactly the same way as in v 6. Here, however, patent reference is made to Samson's "hot anger" which he takes out on the men of Ashkelon, killing and spoiling them in order to fulfil his commitment to the thirty who were able to answer the riddle. We should regard this as Yahweh's first strike "against the Philistines" (v 4), perhaps prefigured in v 6 by the slaughter of the lion who dared stand against him, Yahweh's appointed deliverer. As J. Gray (352) comments, the spirit moves Samson to "his proper work of war with the Philistines".

Soggin (243) notes that in the context of the celebration of this marriage, Samson violates his vow twice: touching a corpse and drinking wine: and poses the question: "does the text know anything of ch 13?" In the final form of the text this surely points to Yahweh's great forbearance.

Having apparently repudiated his wife (14:19) Samson then returned to her (15:1) only to discover that she had already been given to another. Insulted, he determined to "do [the Philistines] mischief" which was their just desert (v 3) [The implication seems to be that Samson was not blameless in his dealings with the Philistines in chapter 14!].

Tying firebrands between the tails of three hundred foxes Samson caused great destruction. As a consequence the Philistines burned his wife and her family. Samson revenged their death "with great slaughter" (v 8). The spirit of Yahweh is not mentioned in this connection.

We can agree with Wharton (56) that the following episode (vv 9-17) is "not flattering to the Judahites". It is clear that they accept Philistine dominance and are intent only

on maintaining the status quo. "They have grown used to foreign rule and prefer the relative security it provides" (so, Crenshaw, 1974:481). Critical of the rash exploits of Samson, and afraid that he might endanger their peace, they collaborate with the enemy in securing his arrest. When one contrasts the attitude of the Judahites here with their crusading spirit of chapter 1, we have a further evidence of the deterioration that has taken place. Gunn (1987:114) comments, "the people are ... unable to recognise the "judge" upon whom the divine spirit has fallen".

At Lehi, the Philistines "came shouting to meet him (lqr'tw)". We might note the parallel in 14:5 "a young lion roared against him (lqr'tw)". It is likely that the wording is more than coincidental (so, Exum, 1983:38). There seems to be the suggestion that what began at 14:5 is seen to climax here, where once more "the spirit of Yahweh came mightily upon him ...", resulting, firstly in his own personal freedom, for with extraordinary ease he threw off the imprisoning ropes. Boling (239) comments: "Yahweh's spirit is salvific - it keeps Samson in one piece". He then moved against the oppressors and slew one thousand of them - an even greater strike at the Philistines (cf 14:4) than the earlier one in 14:19. Indeed, in his subsequent calling on Yahweh, Samson describes what had taken place as a "great deliverance" (v 18) granted by Yahweh.

Although, as Wharton (56) points out, "the ancient tradition asserts itself in the triumph song (15:16) which boasts only of Samson and his weapon", the reteller of these episodes in chapters 14 and 15 (perhaps the first also to weave them into a single story?) affirms again that it was the spirit of Yahweh, not Samson's strength or his marvellous weapon, which empowered the victory. [We might note (v 19) that Samson's "spirit (rwh) returned and he revived".]

The chapter ends (v 20) with a note about Samson's judgeship (cf also 16:31). As in the Jephthah narrative, there is no mention of peace for there were still many

years of war to come before the Philistines finally submitted under David.

The Samson cycle closes (chapter 16) with an account of two extra-marital relationships that bring Samson into direct conflict again with the Philistines, climaxing in his triumphing over them in death at the temple of Dagon.

These relationships should be read in the light of Othniel's exemplary choice of partner (1:12-15), the warning of 3:6 against inter-marriage with non-Israelites, and the description of Israel's apostasy as harlotry (2:17) [cf also 8:31; 11:1]. It would appear that here in the personal affairs of Samson, if anywhere amongst the judges, we are intended to see the symbolic significance of the judge. We have already suggested in our comments on chapter 13 that Samson's uncut locks may be intended as a symbol of that total dedication to Yahweh's service which was the calling not only of Samson but also of all Israel. If that is indeed the case, then in this chapter (16) we may be intended to see in the career of Samson a reflection of the experience of Israel at least in the period of the Judges [and perhaps also against the broader background of the Deuteronomistic History as a whole].

Certainly the career of Samson in this chapter fits into the broad outlines of the pattern we have seen recurring throughout the period of the Judges. His adulterous relationships might be said to parallel Israel's apostasy and, although there is no explicit indictment of Samson's extra-marital activities, this seems to be implicit in the statement (v 20) that "Yahweh had left him". There is a further obvious parallel in the resultant treatment he experienced at the hands of his Philistine oppressors (v 21).

We are now at the point in the pattern where we expect to read of Yahweh raising up a deliverer in response to the penitent cries of the people - and this is in fact what we find, although here it is Samson himself who, in response

to his prayer, is strengthened to do battle with the Philistines one more time.

But, even prior to his calling upon Yahweh, there is a hint in the text that Yahweh may return to Samson again. Our expectations are raised by v 22 where we read that "the hair of his head began to grow again after it had been shaved". This verse forms the transition from the Samson-Delilah story to the climactic scene in the temple of Dagon and is "one of those pregnant sentences that is the mark of genius" [so, Crenshaw, 1974:501, who further comments (472) that, "even the child who listens attentively cannot fail to note the ray of hope in the darkest hour"].

The position of this verse in the chapter, coming as it does before Samson's prayer, points to Yahweh's willingness to show mercy yet again to Samson [and to Israel?] /64/, but clearly not before he is ready to take Yahweh seriously.

This seriousness we find in the cry of v 28 in which all of Samson's previous wilfulness and presumption (cf v 20) has disappeared as he acknowledges his sole reliance upon Yahweh without any reference to hair shorn or unshorn.

Yahweh's tacit answer is revealed in Samson's final and greatest surge of strength which resulted in the downfall of Dagon and his worshippers (v 30). One final time Samson is seen to be Yahweh's instrument against the Philistines, and in particular against their gods, for, as Gunn (1987: 118) notes, "in his death the captive makes known the impotence of Dagon and the power of Yahweh".

At the same time the essence of true "calling on Yahweh" becomes apparent, involving a repentance that destroys idolatry.

However, the climax of the Samson cycle (and indeed of this main part of the Book of Judges) does not paint a picture of unalloyed achievement. Side by side with the victory

over the Philistines and their god, we have the record of Samson's death "with the Philistines" (v 30) which stands "as a final comment on his infidelity" (so, Wharton, 61). In addition, Israel is not delivered fully from the Philistines and the situation envisaged in 2:20-21 is beginning to materialise (so, Webb, 172). Furthermore, because of the implicit identification of Samson with Israel, we are left wondering if there is any hope for Israel and, if there is, to what straits Yahweh will have to reduce it before it, too, will take its calling to separateness seriously.

The episode closes with this question unresolved, the twin qualities of hope /65/ and grim foreshadowing being present.

Spirit of Yahweh.

Although, from a cursory reading of the Samson narrative the part played by the spirit of Yahweh would appear to be somewhat different from that in the earlier narratives, nevertheless on closer inspection its function in the story as a whole is in fact basically the same. This should not surprise us once we realise that the editors intend us to hear the story under the theological rubric of the entire period.

There are, however, obvious differences. The first is that here the spirit is much more prominent, being mentioned in relation to Samson on four separate occasions - more often than was the case with all the other judges put together. This in itself may be an indication of the deterioration ? taking place in Israel throughout the period of the Judges, pointing as it does to the increasing need for Yahweh's intervention and at the same time to the decreasing (lasting) effect that such intervention had - neither Jephthah nor Samson was successful in breaking the Philistine oppression of Israel.

The other immediately obvious difference is that here the accession of the spirit is nowhere followed by the call to arms against the oppressor. Although, in terms of physical prowess, Samson is marked out as having excellent potential for the office of military leadership (so, Boling, 226), he, nevertheless, acts very much as a loner. Nowhere is it recorded that he commanded an army. As Anderson (46) points out, "his exploits were carried out single-handed; they did not involve the rallying of his own or other tribesmen". Indeed the people seem to have had no heart for battle with the oppressors (15:9ff). Vickery (60) comments, "he inspires no confidence in his abilities on the part of others ... he has no followers whatsoever."

Nevertheless, Samson proved to be a thorn in the flesh of the Philistines, creating havoc amongst them and dealing many of them a fatal blow, indeed, more so in his death than throughout his life. In this sense he can be said to have "begun" to deliver Israel (13:5), this initiation of the resistance movement being attributed to the influence of the spirit of Yahweh who had "begun" to stir Samson in Mahaneh-dan (13:25). Once again the spirit of Yahweh is portrayed as the agent of deliverance or salvation, even if that deliverance is not complete. This is further corroborated if we are meant to consider Samson symbolically. If so, we can regard the spirit of Yahweh as empowering Samson=Israel to free itself from its bondage (oppressors?) and also as equipping it to wreak havoc on them.

The most obvious effect of the spirit's intervention in Samson's life was his endowment with extraordinary physical strength, which he exerted both to ensure his own freedom (15:14) and to take revenge on those who withstood him (14:6 might be included here). It is noteworthy however that Samson's strength seems to exist without the spirit (16:3, 38) and to depend on his being a Nazirite. This, however, does not preclude the stirring up of an innate gift by the spirit. ?

There is no indication of any endowment with wisdom or any other talents requisite for "judging" in the more didactic, judicial or administrative sense - apart, that is, from the riddling, which is an element of wisdom literature in the OT.

Neither does the spirit appear to have any moral influence on this "amoral giant with uninhibited passions" (so, John L. Mackenzie, 158). But, to go to the other extreme and attribute his immorality to the spirit as Vickery does (71) - "the hero's sexual drives and frustrations stem from the same source ... his compulsiveness and impulsiveness ... are not so much his in himself as manifestations of the spirit of Yahweh" - is to go beyond the evidence. *how?*

At first sight, the Samson narrative would seem to suggest that the accession of the spirit was merely momentary or temporary - not an abiding, permanent gift but rather one that was given again and again when required. We have seen, however, that it is possible to read 13:15 as implying the beginning of a continuing process, with the further endowments as further donations (boosts?) of what he already possessed.

The first two experiences of the spirit which appear to have been private, may have been intended as personal confirmations of his position as "deliverer" of Israel; while the final two, which seem to have been public, were perhaps intended as legitimating signs to Israel of his role as deliverer. It is not clear, however, if Samson was aware of the spirit's moving in his life, and certainly, the men of Judah did not recognise his charismatic endowment for 'judgeship' (15:9ff).

The reference to Yahweh leaving him (16:20) foreshadows the experience of king Saul in 1 Sam 16:14, although there it is specifically the spirit of Yahweh that is described as departing from Saul. In this sense it would appear that the gift of the spirit was not necessarily permanent.

One final element we have noted is that of human anger following on the accession of the spirit (14:19). Although there is no mention of divine rage here, it would appear that that is nevertheless what is being reflected in Samson's experience. It is worth noting that rwḥ is used with reference to God in the sense of "the breath as the hard breathing through the nostrils in anger" in a number of texts (Job 4:9; Ex 15:8; 2 Sam 22:16; Is 30:28; 59:19; etc). It is also used of human anger (Jg 8:3; Prov 25:28; 29:11; etc) [so, Briggs, 133].

Summary

The 'spirit of Yahweh' comes upon Othniel, Gideon, Jephthah and Samson, four of the twelve judges of Israel mentioned in the book.

The spirit is not mentioned in relation to Ehud, Shamgar, Deborah/ Barak, Tola, Jair, Ibzan, Elon or Abdon. It is not at all clear why this should be. It may simply be due to the fact that no reference was made to the spirit in the sources and traditions used in the composition of the narratives of these judges. This is most likely the case with the minor judges Tola, Jair, Ibzan, Elon and Abdon - and also with Shamgar - for each of whom only limited details are recorded. In the cases of Ehud and Deborah/Barak it may be that a redactor, editor or narrator simply wished to introduce variety into the recurring framework pattern. In addition Deborah is introduced as a "prophetess" (4:4), which would mark her out from the beginning as a charismatic person "inspired or already having the grace of Yahweh" (so, L.R. Klein, 41). Klein's view (38), that Yahweh's spirit is not given in the case of Ehud because of his duplicity, is scarcely tenable when one considers the moral failures of Gideon, Jephthah, and Samson. [For a further possible explanation see p. 100 below].

Neve's (25ff) suggestion that the spirit was given to authenticate each new institution in Israel does not hold

since, then, it would either have been given only once, to Othniel, or to each of the judges in turn.

The fourfold mention of the spirit's activity in the career of Samson may again simply be due to the sources available but is also likely to have an additional theological purpose in the final form of the text, pointing up the deteriorating situation in Israel towards the end of the Judges' period. ?

The function of the spirit in Judges is closely bound up with the role of the "judges" upon whom it comes. That role was primarily to deliver Israel from the power of the oppressor(s), so that the spirit of Yahweh can be regarded as **the agent of deliverance/ salvation** throughout this period, initiating the resistance movement and, indeed, the whole process that leads eventually to victory over the oppressor and to the re-establishment of peace in the land. Jacob (124) quotes with approval J. Guillet "these ... are acts of liberation ... they mark the stages of the forward march which leads Israel to independence".

Furthermore, since the land is the content of Yahweh's (covenant) promise to his people (1:2; 2:1), the coming of the spirit can also be regarded as re-implementing this promise, after a period during which it was in abeyance because of Israel's apostasy. Much as with the Numbers incident, here it "recovers momentarily the divine promise which had been lost" (Childs, 1979:260). We might even say that the spirit renews the covenant - certainly from Yahweh's side. "In this early period the spirit of God is above all the charismatic spirit which stands in the service of the covenant" (so, Neve, 25).

Following on from this, the spirit may be regarded as a **sign of Yahweh's mercy** towards his people, most obviously so in the narratives of the later judges where it is made clear that Israel has forfeited all rights to Yahweh's blessing. This is true even in Samson's time when the people, having become content with the experience of

oppression, no longer even cry to Yahweh for mercy and help. Yet, he sends his spirit to "begin" (13:25) the process of delivering his people.

At the same time, Yahweh's spirit may be regarded as the **agent of judgement and the sign of Yahweh's anger** with regard to the oppressors of his people. When Yahweh, the Judge (11:27), decides for Israel, he at the same time decides against Ammon. The same is true in each of the narratives. Indeed, in the Samson narrative there is at least one occasion (14:19) when the spirit of Yahweh seems to produce "hot anger" in Samson, an anger which he vents on the men of Ashkelon. We might see in this anger a reflection of Yahweh's own anger against his people's oppressors.

In this connection we might note that five of the seven spirit texts are immediately preceded by a fresh, subsequent (rather than the initial) threat from the enemy/oppressor. It is at that moment of threat and new crisis that the spirit of Yahweh moves Yahweh's man to stand against the approaching enemy. In his anger against their sin Yahweh hands his people over to the oppressors but there comes a moment when he turns in mercy again towards his people and at the same time in anger against the oppressor. It would appear that, if the time of Yahweh's favour coincides with a fresh threat from the oppressor, the spirit [the divine rage?], is given. This may explain why the spirit is not explicitly given to all the judges. In the cases of Ehud, Shamgar and Deborah/ Barak there is no mention of a second threat from the enemy. Instead, Yahweh, through these judges, takes the initiative in attacking the enemy.

As far as its effect on the individual judge is concerned, "here the spirit is unfathomable and incalculable, distributing where and to whom it will. Men hitherto disregarded suddenly emerge as leaders under the work of the rwh" (so, Baumgartel, 366).

In the cases of Othniel, Gideon and Jephthah the endowment with the spirit is followed immediately or almost immediately with **feats of great military prowess**. We are to understand that it was the spirit who equipped these individuals for this role to which they had been called by Yahweh (or, as was the case with Jephthah, by the elders of Israel). The spirit imparted to them - or in the case of Othniel and Jephthah it may be more correct to say, confirmed them in - the courage, physical strength, warlike energy and military prowess which enabled them to lead Israel to victory, shattering in the process the yoke of the oppressor. The victory would appear to have been the visible sign of spirit endowment, and thus the judge's legitimation.

Samson's case was somewhat different. With him the accession of the spirit was followed immediately by **individual, personal feats of extraordinary physical strength**. However, we have seen that even these were closely related to the threat from the Philistine oppressors and were part of Yahweh's plan of attack against the Philistines (14:4).

There are a few indications of other roles played by the judges in this period - for example, didactic and religious including the putting away of idolatry (cf 2:17; 6:25ff; 16:28ff); judicial (4:4); and executive/ administrative/ diplomatic (11:9; etc). It may well be, as, for example, Briggs (142) suggests, that we are to regard the spirit as equipping the judges with the requisite wisdom, discernment, diplomacy, etc for the fulfilment of such roles. However, in the final form of the narrative this is only of minor significance.

One further thing is clear - there is no indication that the spirit worked any kind of inner, moral transformation in the lives of the judges (cf, e.g., Baumgartel, 366). This is nowhere more obvious than in the Samson narrative where the hero is sexually incontinent and fails at every turn to keep his Nazirite vows. But even Gideon has his

foreign concubine and leads Israel back into idolatry; while Jephthah takes a superstitious vow and fulfils it in breach of the deuteronomic law. Boling (25) comments: "The presence of the Yahweh spirit does not make the man an automaton - the Yahweh spirit is one of many components in the personality".

As far as **the actual moment of endowment** with the spirit is concerned, in contrast to the Numbers incident, there is little information to indicate precisely how the spirit came; whether or not the judge himself was conscious of it; and whether or not it was obvious or visible to the people. In particular, no mention is made of any activity such as "prophesying". Most of our help here comes from the actual verbs used, which in the cases of Othniel and Jephthah give nothing away. In Gideon's case the use of lbš could suggest that he was conscious of the moment of endowment or envelopment, particularly since his earlier diffidence, hesitancy and fear seem to have disappeared immediately. It is also possible that Samson had some consciousness of the spirit's movements in his life, p^cm and slh suggesting to some commentators some type of ecstatic experience.

There is no clear indication as to whether the people were given any outward sign that the spirit-endowed individuals were in fact Yahweh's chosen and appointed men for the hour. The victorious outcome of the battle may have been the only legitimating sign. However, the fact that an individual appeared who was willing to lead Israel against the oppressors may, in itself, have been taken as a sign. If this was indeed the case, then the Israelites of Samson's day were most culpable of all, for not only did they fail to recognise in Samson Yahweh's spirit-endowed deliverer-judge who could have led them to freedom, but they (or at least the Judahites) even collaborated with the enemy in securing Samson's arrest (15:10ff).

As regards the permanence or otherwise of the gift of the spirit, we are, again, largely in the dark. Clearly in the case of Othniel, Gideon and Jephthah the donation of the

spirit was a one-off measure. This, however, does not of itself mean that the gift was only momentary or temporary. At first sight, the Samson narrative with its fourfold mention of the spirit seems to imply a momentary donation, given from time to time when required. However, it is possible to read 13:15 as implying the beginning of a continuing process, with the further endowments as further donations of the spirit Samson already possessed. However, the fact that Yahweh departed from him (16:20) shows that the gift of the spirit was not necessarily permanent, though 2:18 might suggest that permanence was the norm.

The 'evil spirit', which appears here for the first time in the Hebrew Bible, can be regarded as **the agent of God's retributive justice**, initiating the whole process of retribution described in chapter 9. It should be thought of as a similar type of phenomenon to Yahweh's spirit and not as a human disposition as some commentators have argued. It is clearly under the divine sway and furthers Yahweh's purposes, much as the "wind" in the Numbers incident.

CHAPTER THREE

1 SAMUEL 1-19

Preface

The next texts we consider are found in 1 Samuel, the specific references being 10:6, 10; 11:6; 16:13, 14; 19:20, 23. In addition, there is a series of references to an 'evil' spirit (16:14, 15, 23; 18:10; 19:9) which we shall also consider. /1/

Methodology

In the Hebrew Bible tradition 1 and 2 Samuel were long reckoned as one book, a fact witnessed to by Eusebius and Jerome and also by the presence of the Massoretic mid-point at 1 Sam 28:24. Since the rise of historical criticism, however, various theories have been proposed which view these books as a composition of several sources which have been knit or linked together to form a continuous narrative climaxing in the reign of David [see any of the recent standard commentaries on 1 Samuel or OT Introductions].

Such conjectures are perfectly reasonable but leave one with a narrative whose integrity is open to serious question (see in particular on chapters 8-12). However, in a number of recent studies scholars have interpreted all or part of 1 Samuel from a literary perspective and as having an integrity of its own (see especially Gunn, Humphreys, Jobling and Eslinger). While not disregarding the insights of critical research and source and redaction criticism, it is the holistic, final form approach of these scholars I wish to adopt in this present study as we investigate the role of the "spirit of Yahweh" in 1 Samuel.

Exposition

In our study in the Book of Judges we saw that from the outset the question of leadership over Israel is brought to

the fore - not only the 'who?' but also the 'what kind?' of leadership. That question continues to be pursued in 1 Samuel, where kingship - first aired, but rejected, in the Gideon-Abimelech cycle in Judges - is established and Israel undergoes a major conversion from tribal league to unified monarchy. That this was an important development for Israel is clear from the space given to it in 1 Samuel.

It is in relation to the first two occupants of the throne of Israel, Saul and David, that we read of the activity of the spirit of Yahweh in 1 and 2 Samuel.

The spirit texts which we are to consider in this chapter belong to the sections of 1 Samuel constituting, firstly, chapters 8-12 which deal with the rise of the monarchy in Israel; and, secondly, (what has come to be known as) the History of David's Rise (HDR: 1 Sam 16 - 2 Sam 5) which, as the title suggests, traces David's ascent to the throne. Both of these sections - at least in the view of a number of scholars - may well have already existed as literary units prior to incorporation into the Deuteronomistic History. However, in order to appreciate the position and significance of this material in the context of the whole of 1 Samuel it will be necessary to consider briefly the early chapters of the book, with particular reference to anything they might have to say regarding the monarchy.

The opening words of chapter one recall for us similar introductory phrases in the stories of the judges, in particular Judges 13:2 (cf also Judges 17:1; 19:1), and, therefore, suggest that we may be intended to read the following story of Samuel's birth in the light of the prior stories of the judges. /2/ The likelihood of this is increased given the many similarities between the Samuel and Samson birth narratives (cf Blenkinsopp, 1975:92; McCarter, 1980a:64-66). There is, however, no explicit indication at this stage as to what Samuel's future role is to be. Nevertheless, Yahweh is portrayed as working behind the scenes (cf vv 5; 19) and, although his purpose remains as yet mysterious, our expectations are aroused.

In v 20 the explanation of the name Samuel is related to the Hebrew verb š'1/ 'ask' (cf also 1:17 (x2), 27 (x2), 28 (x2); 2:20, all with respect to Samuel). Since this word would more aptly figure in an etymology of the name Saul ('asked for'), it is often argued (e.g., McCarter, 1980a: 62, 65-66) that the present account of Samuel's birth and dedication is a reworking of traditions properly belonging to the Saul cycle.

A number of scholars, however, argue convincingly against this view (e.g., Eslinger, 1985:93; Gordon, 1986:23). Nevertheless, there would seem to be, at the very least, especially in v 28, a deliberate foreshadowing of Saul's name. There is, however, no consensus as to the significance of this adumbration. It is regarded by some scholars as a criticism of Saul (so, Hertzberg, 26, "the real deliverer is not the first king but the last judge"; similarly, R.W. Klein, 9: "Samuel is the ideal figure from whom Saul - linked to him by paranomasia - falls so far short"), but by others as a hint of the type of monarchy that will emerge with the person Saul (so, Eslinger, 1985: 94).

With chapter two we have the first mention in the books of Samuel of the monarchy. This comes in v 10b at the end of Hannah's Song (2:1-10), which, although regarded by many scholars /3/ as secondary in its present context, is nevertheless recognised by even some of these as being thematically appropriate with regard to both the preceding and also the subsequent passages. /4/ The song provides us with "a theological reflection on the principles underlying the events of chapter 1" (so, Eslinger, 1985:111) and also "offers an interpretative key for [the history which unfolds in the books of Samuel] which is, above all, to be understood from a theocentric perspective" (so, Childs, 1979:273).

In the immediate context it serves as an appropriate introduction to the events of chapters 2-3 which set up an explicit contrast between the wicked Elides who are to be

'brought low' and Samuel who is to be 'exalted', not only to take their place, it would appear (see especially 2:25-26), but also to the added role of prophet (ch 3, esp v 20). /5/

As we have noted, the song also anticipates the rise of the monarchy (cf 2:10b, "king" and "anointed"). Eslinger (1985: 111, 140) thinks that this is a reference to the monarchy established in chapters 9-12. However, in view of v 35 where we find another reference to the "anointed", this time served by a "faithful priest" who is identified by most commentators as Zadok (cf 1 Kings 2:35), it is more likely that it is the Davidic king who is adumbrated here. /6/ In any case, it is worth noting that kingship in chapter 2 is evaluated positively (so, R.W. Klein, 19): the king is Yahweh's, being strengthened, exalted and anointed by him.

With chapter four a new scene in the narrative opens up, centring around a conflict with the Philistines in which "the ark of the covenant" /7/ played a central role. This scene extends to chapter 7:1 or 2.

The mention of preparations for engagement in battle with the Philistines (vv 1ff) is a further reminder to us of the Judges' narratives (cf Judges 10:6-7; 13:1, 5; etc) and, in particular, of the failure of Jephthah and Samson to deliver Israel from their oppressive sway. That same failure continues to be experienced here, under the judgeship of Eli (4:18), as Israel is defeated twice, despite the presence of the ark with them on the field of battle on the second occasion! The reason for the defeat is not specifically mentioned, but the association of Hophni and Phinehas with events (4:4, 10) "plays on the foreboding doom announced first in chapters 2-3" (so, Stoebe /8/).

Chapter 5:1-5 makes it clear that the failure did not lie with Yahweh who went on to score a personal double victory over Dagon /9/ right in the heart of Philistia /10/, "turning him into Humpty-Dumpty in the process" (so,

Gordon, 1986:92), as a prelude to a kind of second Exodus (see, for example, R.W. Klein, 56-7, 61).

R.W. Klein's suggestion (52) that part of the purpose of the 'arranger' of the book of Samuel throughout these chapters 4-6, was to "create a context for evaluating the people's request for a king in chapter 8", may have some substance, but in view of the failure of Eli's judgeship (4:18) and of the fact that Yahweh's victory against the Philistines was achieved without any human instrumentality whatever, we cannot agree with his assessment that these chapters in themselves present a negative view of kingship. ?

The Rise of the Monarchy

We have already mentioned that the first of the spirit texts occurs in chapters 8-12 which deal with the rise of the monarchy. "This section stands between the formal closing of one unit, 7:13-17, echoing the formulae which mark the end of the story of a judge (cf Judges 3:30; 8:28), and the formal opening of another unit, 13:1, a formula for beginning the report of a reign" (so, McCarthy, 402). However, many scholars [e.g., McCarthy (403), R.W. Klein (64-65), Gordon (1986:30,105ff)] regard chapter 7 as a kind of preface to what follows - a preface whose purpose becomes clear when read in this way and not in isolation.

In itself, the chapter presents Samuel as a judge (cf vv 6, 15, 16, 17), indeed, as a model and successful judge /11/, under whose leadership the people repent with the result that the Philistine threat (which has continued since Jephthah's time) is resolved in the clearest terms (v 13), Israel has its territory restored, and experiences peace (v 14). All is well in Israel.

The picture portrayed, however, is clearly idealised (compare v 13 with 9:16; 10:5; and chs 13-14) and it is this that has prompted many scholars to see the theological function of this chapter as an attempt to predispose the reader to a negative evaluation of the request for a king

in 8:5: "our narrator would have us believe that ... Israel could perpetrate no greater breach of trust ... than to demand for themselves a human king" (so, McCarter, 1980a: 151). The old theocratic order is sufficient. Kingship is unnecessary.

While appreciating the appeal of such an interpretation, we do, however, need to take Eslinger's caution (1986:248, 251ff) to heart in view of the new circumstances in 8:1-3, which are "full of associations with the Elide affair" and evoke a sense of foreboding. /12/

Chapters 8-12

The story of Saul's emergence as Israel's first king proceeds by a number of stages which, following Gordon (1984:40), we may summarise as:

- (i) a request for a king by the tribal elders of Israel (8:1-22)
- (ii) the private anointing of Saul (9:1-10:16);
- (iii) divine nomination and public presentation (10:17-27);
- (iv) military success and public acclamation (11:1-15);
- (v) final speech by Samuel (12:1-25).

These separate accounts or traditions /13/ seem to display markedly different attitudes towards the monarchy as an institution and towards King Saul himself and this has led virtually all interpreters from the time of Julius Wellhausen to identify the above sections as either pro- or anti-monarchical: (ii) and (iv) - the sections in which the 'spirit' texts occur - being identified as 'pro'; and (i), (iii) and (v) as 'anti'. The pro-monarchical passages have usually been identified as earlier than the others /14/, with (iv) corresponding most nearly of all to the circumstances in which Saul came to the throne. According to Wellhausen the 'late' source represented the Deuteronomistic point of view; so negative an attitude would have been inconceivable while the Davidic house still ruled.

Since Wellhausen, three main lines of approach to solving this problem have been pursued: source critical, tradition-historical and redaction critical /15/. [For a review of the scholarship, cf Birch, 1976:1-10; Childs, 1979:263-77; Mayes, 1978:1-10; McCarter, 1980:12-14; et al]

Some recent studies have pointed out that the material does not break easily into two opposing views of the kingdom, but reflects far more complex attitudes /16/.

Nevertheless, even these critical treatments "cannot avoid the problem of why the final form of the text brings together such apparently opposed points of view" (so, Jobling, 1986b:45). Buber (1967:83) poses the question well: "how could two [or more!] literary works, produced by such opposing purposes, be joined to one another without nullifying not only the unity but also the credibility of the resulting book?"

This has led a small number of scholars to suggest, in recent years, that the interweaving of pro- and anti-monarchic voices is intentional and meaningful. Buber (1967:83), for example, speaks of a deliberate editorial 'balancing' of points of view. Eslinger somewhat similarly (1985:38) raises the possibility that a neutral perspective - a study of a debating problem - is being voiced; and would appear to be supported by Jobling (1986b: 46) who thinks that the editors "let stand a very basic contradiction in Israel's system, perhaps because they perceived or sensed that it was a contradiction that Israel should go on living within". McCarthy (404) goes further and views the section as "a unity which tries to give a coherent account and explanation of the inauguration of kingship in Israel". He regards chapter 12 as a successful resolution of the theological problem of the monarchy.

We will see in our study (cf below on 11:1-15) that the various stages of the story are not as incompatible as some have argued. Nevertheless, as Childs (1979:277-8) points out, the present ordering of the chapters "offers a

particular canonical interpretation of the diversity within the tradition". Starting with Wellhausen's formulation of a pro-monarchical source (A), and an anti-monarchical source (B), he believes that the intention of the final editor emerges with clarity - B A B A B - the 'B' source or tradition with its anti-monarchical tone being given the pre-eminence, enclosing as it does the 'A' source. Nevertheless, he also reminds us that the message of the 'A' source remains of great importance and that its emphasis is enhanced by its new editorial function. "The establishment of the kingdom - even though arising out of disobedience - is not to be viewed as a merely secular act. Although the establishment of a monarchy was not according to the original divine plan, God is still deeply involved".

This involvement of Yahweh is evident even in chapter 8 where the request for a king is considered as a rejection of Yahweh and as a mark of Israel's renewed apostasy (vv 7-8), despite what may be regarded as the mitigating circumstances of the opening five verses [see note /12/].

Yahweh's instructions to Samuel in this chapter (vv 9 and 22) indicate that he is not abdicating. "Yahweh still controls Israel's politics even in the matter of kings" (so, Eslinger, 1985:281).

With 8:22, the way is paved for the description of Saul's anointing.

1 SAMUEL 9:1-10:16

The first reference to the spirit of Yahweh in the experience of Saul is found in this section, the limits of which are determined by the story of the lost asses.

Because of a number of apparent, internal tensions in the unit a complex tradition history is often assumed to lie behind the present text. Consequently, many attempts have been made [e.g., by Birch (1971; 1976:29-42), Mayes (1978: 13-14), Mettinger (64-79)] to identify the different layers

/17/ in the text's history; but the lack of agreement on which verses are to be assigned to which probably means that a precise delineation of the tradition history is beyond our present capabilities (cf R.W. Klein, 84; Gunn, 1980: 13; Hauer, 306; and Hertzberg, 78-80). However, we can surely agree with McCarter (1980a:186-7) that the focus of the story in its present form is the anointing of Saul to the office of 'nagid' by the prophet Samuel acting on Yahweh's behalf.

It is clear from 10:1ff that the accession of the spirit on this occasion was intended as a 'sign' to Saul himself that he was Yahweh's choice for this office. This holds true, even if with some commentators we follow the MT in 10:1-2 and omit the reference to 'sign' present at this point in the LXX, since the term appears again in verses 7 and 9, although admittedly in the plural [an indication of different sources?].

Throughout this whole section there are a number of other indications that Saul is regarded as Yahweh's choice. Indeed, by his introduction into the larger narrative at 9:1ff so soon after Yahweh's command to Samuel to "make them a king" (8:22), we are surely meant to anticipate that Saul is Yahweh's man for the job. This seems all the more likely in that his introduction here (as most commentators have noted) in some measure parallels and, therefore, encourages a recollection of the beginning of Samuel's story in 1:1ff /18/. We have already seen (p 106 above) how the use of the verb š'1 in ch 1 links Saul with Samuel by paranomasia. Eslinger (1985:287) asks: "Is 'Saul' (ša'ûl) perhaps an answer to Israel's request (haššo'alîm, 8:10)? Is he another of Yahweh's dedicated servants (cf 1:28)?" (cf Gunn, 1980:123).

It certainly appears that Saul's qualifications for leadership are being set out in the opening verses of this chapter.

Most commentators /19/ regard the six generation genealogy and the further description of Kish as a 'gbr hyl' (cf Judges 6:12; 11:1) - i.e., a 'mighty warrior', 'man of wealth' or 'substantial citizen' (so, McCarter, 1980a:173) - as an indication of the respectability and high status of both himself and his son Saul. /20/ In addition, Saul's outstanding physical characteristics - a traditional part of the biblical presentation of an Israelite hero(ine) /21/ and to be "interpreted as a physical symptom of special divine favour" (so, McCarter, 1980a:173) - are highlighted. Standing quite literally head and shoulders above his peers (v 2; cf 10:23f) he is "every inch a king" (so, Gordon, 1986:112).

The praise, however, may not be altogether unmixed. Humphreys (1978:20), for one, is aware of a 'discordant subtone' in vv 1-2 inasmuch as they "correspond most closely to words about another doomed potential king, Absalom (2 Sam 14:25-6)". Nevertheless, there are other characteristics displayed by Saul in the early verses of chapter 9 which tend to suggest his further qualification for leadership. There is, for example, his prompt obedience (v 4) which may also be intended to reflect on the poor example of Eli and Samuel's sons (cf 2:12, etc; 8:3ff). In addition, Saul is portrayed in v 5 as a devoted son concerned for his father's well-being.

That Saul is Yahweh's choice is further indicated by the emphasis placed on his apparent ignorance of what was happening to him. Far from being self-seeking or manipulative /22/, Saul is portrayed here as coming to kingship quite unsuspectingly. We get the first hint of his innocent ignorance in v 5 where we read that when he came to the "land of Zuph" Saul was for going home. The reader knows that Zuph was Samuel's land (cf 1:1), and is, therefore, prepared for the revelation that Saul's journey had a significance of which he himself was as yet completely unaware. Saul's ignorance is further emphasised by the fact that it is his servant who brings to his attention (v 6) the existence in the neighbourhood of a

"man of God" /23/ of whom they might enquire. In view of this there would seem to be some merit in Gordon's suggestion (1986:113) that "a kind of metonymy" is at work here: Saul's ignorance of the 'man of God' and Samuel's anonymity at this point in the narrative representing "the young man's complete unawareness of what lies ahead of him". This "high destiny" - and Saul's ignorance of it - is further hinted at in the servant's suggestion (v 6) that they enquire of the man of God with regard to - not the asses, but - "the journey on which we have set out".

With the words "perhaps he can tell us (yaggîd) ..." we have the first in a series of occurrences of the root ngd in this section (cf vv 8, 18, 19; 10:15, 16) /24/. Again, this frequent use of higgîd would appear to be one of the techniques employed to heighten the fundamental irony of a young man's unknowing quest for a kingdom (so, McCarter, 1980a:176, who comments: "Saul in his innocence asks the man of God to inform (higgîd) him about the lost asses, but what he is informed is that he is to be prince (nāgîd, 9:16) over Israel"). /25/ ✓

One further token that Saul is Yahweh's choice is the strong emphasis, in particular throughout the early part of this section, on the role of providence in Saul's experience. This can already be seen in the very existence of a 'man of God' of whom they could enquire, just at the point when Saul was ready to turn back (vv 5-6). It is further witnessed to by: the fact that the servant happened to have a piece of silver to pay the man of God's 'fee' (v 8); the chance meeting with women going to draw water (v 11); the fact that they arrived just in time for a feast (v 13) at which Saul will be guest of honour; etc.

With Samuel's appearance (v 14) /26/, and particularly by means of the 'flash-back' in vv 15-16, the narrator finally confirms our suspicion that the events on the human plane were being moulded and guided by the divine hand (v 16). The strayed asses have been serving the higher purpose of bringing Saul to Samuel.

Another hint that Saul is Yahweh's choice may be present in the account of the meal to which Saul is invited (vv 13f; 22ff) /27/ and at which he is honoured by being given a place at the head of the table and, in addition, a reserved portion of meat. The purpose of the meal is never explicitly described, but Mettinger (114) may well be correct in understanding it as an anticipation of a coronation banquet (cf 1 Sam 11:15; 16:1-33; 2 Sam 15:7-12; 1 Kgs 1:9). We note that guests had been invited, apparently a technical term (so, R.W. Klein, 87) in the coronation ritual of Adonijah (1 Kgs 1:41, 49; cf also Ezek 39:17; Zeph 1:7). It would seem that the reserved portion of meat is intended as a proof to Saul of, at the very least, Samuel's precognition and therefore to confirm to him what has been revealed to the reader in v 16, that his destiny has been guided and pre-arranged, leading him to this meeting (cf Gunn, 1980:61; Eslinger, 1985:314; against Hertzberg, 84).

The appearance of Samuel (and the first mention of his name in this section) at this point (v 14ff) further underlines Yahweh's choice of Saul. Samuel last appeared in 8:22, having been instructed by Yahweh to "make them a king". His reappearance here coincides with Yahweh's return to the stage, so that in terms of the larger narrative we are surely to understand Yahweh's further commands to Samuel here as a specification of the manner in which Samuel was to 'make a king' - he is to anoint Saul (v 16), the anointing itself being a "visible sign of divine election" (so, Mettinger, 207).

To date, then, we have recognised a strong emphasis throughout this section on Saul as Yahweh's choice of king. But we should not conclude too readily that this is an entirely "pro-monarchical" section. There are several indications that the 'kingship' to which Saul is anointed is a somewhat circumscribed affair. We have already noted Humphreys' warning on vv 1-2 (above p 113). In addition, it would seem to be implicit in his anointing. /28/ In Mettinger's view (230) the leitmotif of the historical

cases /29/ of anointing was to express the idea that God had chosen and was obligated to the anointed. There is, of course, another side to this coin which needs to be given equal weight in our present context, namely that the act of anointing makes the anointed the vassal of Yahweh (cf de Vaux, 1972:162). "Divine anointing submits the anointed to divine authority" (so, Kutsch, quoted in Eslinger, 1985: 464, n 29). This submission to authority is further witnessed to by Samuel's role in the anointing. The fact that he is commissioned by Yahweh to invest Saul with the office of nagid reveals the lines of authority: Yahweh > Samuel > Saul. Furthermore, there is the fact that Saul was to be anointed, not as king (mlk), but as 'nagid' (ngyd, cf 9:16; 10:1) /30/, a word whose etymology points to the meaning 'designated one', in this case 'king-designate' the title proposed classically by Alt (195). /31/ Some scholars suggest that the use of the title here is deliberate, indicating a limited role for Saul (e.g., Baldwin, 89). It is certainly noteworthy that the root mlk is not met until 10:16; and equally noteworthy that in v 17 csr is used to describe Saul's function in Israel. Eslinger (1985:309) notes that the verb which is normally translated in biblical texts as 'restrain/ control/ keep within bounds', has not yet been successfully shown to mean 'rule' (RSV).

These verses, in particular v 16, are regarded by some scholars as part of a call narrative which is paralleled most closely in the narratives of Moses and Gideon. From the table /32/ it would appear that there is here a deliberate echoing of some elements of the Exodus narrative. Saul, it would seem, is to be a new Moses, delivering Israel from the Philistines as Moses delivered them from the Egyptians. /33/ The mention of the Philistines, however, recalls the failure of both Jephthah and Samson to deliver Israel from their grip (cf Judges 10:7; 13:5). It may be that the parallels with the Gideon narrative are intended to suggest that Saul's role is to be that of a 'judge-saviour' (so, for example, Albright, 163). It would, perhaps, be better to say that the role attributed to Saul here "places the new designate well

within previously established theocratic bounds" (so, Eslinger, 1985:305; cf also Jobling 1986b:64). It would appear, then, that while the passage acknowledges the fact of Saul's vocation, it also seeks to define it in a way that is compatible with Yahweh's continued exercise of sovereignty over his people (so, Gordon, 1986:32).

Turning to the report of the anointing of Saul (10:1-2) and the subsequent context in which our spirit texts are set, we discover a major textual deviation between MT and LXX in v 1. The majority of scholars (e.g., McCarter, 1980a:171) follow LXX which contains a substantial addition most of which reflects almost verbatim the earlier wording of 9:16-17. MT, however, gives no appearance of corruption. Consequently, there are some scholars who defend MT and explain LXX as a deviation (e.g., Stoebe /34/).

The two slight differences in wording between the present verses and 9:16-17 are the replacement of 'Philistines' (9:16) with the more general term 'enemies', and the naming of Yahweh as the anointer of Saul, which serves to emphasise once again his choice of Saul. Samuel pours but Yahweh anoints.

At the same time the apparent circumscription of Saul's office is also hinted at, not only in the use of 'nagid' but also in the addition of "over his heritage" (v 2; and cf Deut 32:8f). Even under the new constitution Yahweh will not relinquish his claim upon Israel whom he has chosen. Saul's proper station will, therefore, be that of viceregent. This seeming circumscription is all the more apparent in the longer LXX text adopted in RSV.

There is one significant addition not found in the wording of 9:16-17 and that is the reference to the anointing as a 'sign'. This sign is apparently in three parts (cf signs vv 7, 9) /35/.

Having indicated earlier (see note /32/) the parallels between the call of Saul and that of Moses in Exodus 3 we

might note that in Ex 4:1-9 we have a similar series of three signs, another indication, perhaps, that Saul is being prepared as a second Moses to lead Israel to deliverance. The signs in Exodus 4, although doubtless given at least in part for his own assurance, were primarily intended to convince the Hebrew slaves that God had at last provided a deliverer. Saul's signs, on the other hand, are intended primarily for his own encouragement (v 1 "this shall be the sign to you"). /36/

It has been noted by a number of commentators that each of the three predicted incidents corresponds to a specific event on the journey that led Saul to Samuel (cf R.W. Klein, 91; Buber, quoted in Eslinger, 1985:321) - further confirmation to Saul that his destiny lay in the guiding hand of Yahweh.

The most impressive of the three signs was the third (vv 5-6), surely also the most important in that it is the only one whose actual fulfilment is described (cf v 10). Saul would encounter a prophetic band at Gibeathelohim; come under the influence of the divine spirit; and join the band in their prophesying. The encounter with this group of prophets matches Saul's previous encounter with (the prophet) Samuel (9:14) on the way to a 'high place'. But the parallel also serves to highlight a major difference for, here, Saul is overcome by the spirit of Yahweh and actually joins in the prophetic activity. Between the two incidents lies the event that explains the change, namely Saul's induction into the theocratic service as nagid.

Despite McCarter's insistence (1980a:183) that "'signs' in this case = 'wonderful things' and have nothing to do with Samuel's prediction of a confirmatory sign in v 1", it would appear that each of the three incidents is a sign to Saul of his new status as Yahweh's anointed nagid and a proof of God's guiding presence in his life (v 7).

The accession of the spirit on this occasion is, therefore, firstly a confirmatory sign to Saul that he is indeed

Yahweh's anointed nagid. And in view of the significance of anointing (see above pp 115f) the spirit can also be regarded here as a token of Yahweh's contractual commitment to Saul his chosen nagid [We may also be intended to understand that Yahweh here re-affirms, in grace and mercy, his commitment to Israel (vis-à-vis the "Philistines" (v 5)].

A number of commentators (e.g., R.W. Klein, 92) view the description of the accession of the spirit here as being similar to that in the experience of the judges. Consequently, they regard Saul as a saviour figure like the judges. However, the parallels with the Judges' texts are not all that close. Only in the Samson texts do we find the verb slh used; while the immediate effect of the spirit on the individual is, as McCarter (1980a:182) notes, quite different from that in all the Judges' texts including those in the Samson cycle, finding expression "not in the heroic animation of the warrior but in prophetic ecstasy instead."

And yet, in context, there would appear to be at least a hint of Saul's future military role. V 5 makes clear that the affusion of the spirit was to occur at Gibeathelohim where, we are told, "there is a garrison of the ^{Substone} Philistines" (though 'garrison' could be translated 'prefect' or 'governor', so McCarter (1980a:172), following LXX).

This mention of the Philistines is likely to be significant (cf 9:16) and may suggest that Saul's experience of the divine spirit is directly related to the Philistine menace which it will be his task to remove. This could also account for the use of the rather strong verb slh here and would seem to be confirmed by the words of v 7 "when these signs meet you, do whatever your hand finds to do, for God is with you". As Irwin (124) points out, this piece of advice to Saul is closely bound to the fulfilment of the signs. When it is recalled that the final event in these three incidents is Saul's conversion to another man (v 6),

it is clear that Samuel's instruction is directed to Saul in his new status as Yahweh's nagid. Hence, the freedom granted to Saul in v 7 is not completely unconditioned. This is in keeping with Schmidt's conclusion (quoted by Eslinger, 1985:323) that the expression to do 'what comes to hand' does not mean unlimited personal freedom, but rather that a person has been enabled to perform a task. In the context of 1 Samuel this would seem to be best exemplified by his attack on the Ammonites after the imposition of the spirit in 11:6; but it may also relate directly to the challenge of the Philistine presence mentioned in v 5 (so, Gordon, 1986:118).

The source of the enabling - for whatever task lies to hand - is divine (v 7), "for God is with you". As Yahweh's anointed, Saul may be assured of the divine presence and help in his forthcoming endeavours; and in this the possession of the spirit of Yahweh is crucial (cf v 6). The affusion of the spirit may, therefore, be regarded also as empowering and enabling Saul for all that was entailed in being Yahweh's nagid, not least his military role; and as mediating the presence of God to Saul.

In v 6 the immediate effect of the spirit on Saul is expressed in the words "you shall prophesy with them and be turned into another man". But what did Saul's 'conversion' entail? At this point R.W. Klein (92) refers us to Ezekiel 11:19; 18:31; 36:26 where the possibility of a "new heart" is mentioned. However, it is doubtful whether these are true parallels. Not only are the noun, adjective and verb here in v 6 different from those employed in the Ezekiel texts (though the noun and verb in v 9 here are the same) but the Ezekiel texts are addressed to Israel collectively and, perhaps most significantly, in context, they all identify clearly the sinfulness of the 'old' heart to be removed. There is no indication whatsoever of any such emphasis here. Rather, we should see here a further indication of Saul's change of status. His prophesying under the influence of the spirit of Yahweh will confirm to him (and, if necessary, convince him) that he is indeed a

different man from the Saul who left home in search of asses - he is now Yahweh's nagid, under Yahweh's authority, but also with Yahweh's enabling. He has a new source of power and enabling in keeping with his new status.

The immediate effect of Saul's endowment with the spirit of God was that he "prophesied" along with the members of the prophetic band (v 10). Most commentators regard this as an example of ecstatic prophecy which we have already met and considered in chapter one (see pp 34ff above for details).

The question of the significance of Saul's involvement here in this ecstatic activity of the prophetic band, would seem to find its answer in vv 11-13 which record for us the people's reaction to Saul's seemingly new position among the prophets - a reaction encapsulated in the proverb, "Is Saul also among the prophets?" /37/, which has been subjected to various attempts at explanation.

Many commentators view the activity of the prophets here in a negative way. Of these, a number feel that the proverb expresses surprise that Saul should be found in their company [so, for example, Hertzberg (86) who comments, "how does a reasonable man, well-placed in civic life come to be in this eccentric company?" Similarly, McKane (122); and Johnson (1962:16)]; while others regard it as disapproving of Saul [so, e.g., Baldwin (92); Irwin (125); and Lindblom (1973:30-41) who thinks that it reflects the criticism that Saul could have had access to means of revelation of a higher rank (e.g. the ephod, lot-casting, or the advice of Samuel) rather than resorting to prophetic bands].

Other commentators are of the opinion that the proverb shows no negative evaluation of the prophets, but only of Saul [so, e.g., Sturdy, (1970:206-13), who understands the question as Davidic propaganda hostile to Saul and implying a negative answer: Saul did not have the prophetic spirit of prophecy]. Sturdy thinks this is one of the earliest forms of the tradition that the spirit left Saul.

Eppstein (303) is of the opinion that the proverb expresses doubt in the historical tradition of Israel as to whether Saul was in truth the last of the charismatic prophet-judges or exclusively the first of the kings.

However, each of these proposals attempts to interpret the proverb without any context - hence their divergent results. All of them assume that the stories explaining the proverb here and in ch 19 are secondary to the proverb itself, but we must note (with R.W. Klein, 93) that the story functions in 1 Samuel (partly) as a fulfilment of the third sign.

Gibeah (v 10) must be understood in this context as identical with Gibeath-Elohim (v 5). Just as Samuel had promised (though with minor differences in phraseology), the spirit came on Saul and he prophesied among the prophets. Whatever the previous history of the proverb or the story that explains it, the verses function now as a positive fulfilment of vv 5-6 and they record the people's reaction of amazement, wonder and perhaps also puzzlement as to Saul's 'conversion' "what has come over the son of Kish?"

The reader knows that Saul's prophesying is a manifestation of God's presence with him and of his new position within the theocracy as Yahweh's nagid. However, his own acquaintances ("all who knew him before", v 11) are unaware of the preceding events. They see only how his behaviour differs from before and that he is identified with a new group. Their double question reflects their awareness of a change in him and raises the question of its cause (so, Eslinger, 1985:330) and what it indicates.

They do not comprehend the significance of what they witness nor of its source ("who is their father?") /38/ although they do come close to the true meaning of Saul's activity, but, as Eslinger (1985: 331) notes, only accidentally, because the prophets were also considered to be servants and mouthpieces of God. "Saul's participation

in this group's activities is only an ambiguous evidence of his new status". This view would seem to be corroborated by the note in v 13 indicating that "when [Saul] had finished prophesying, he came to the high place". These words suggest that this prophesying was a one-off event in Saul's experience and indeed, as Baldwin (92) notes, there is no evidence that he ever prophesied again [except in his rejection and humiliation, cf ch 19:18ff]. The prophesying in this context was therefore an intimation/ indication to the people of Saul's new status - a status which would remain secret - even to Saul's intimates - until the public declaration of Yahweh's will at the Mizpah convocation (vv 17-27).

This emphasis on the secrecy of Saul's anointing has already been indicated in 9:27 and is further underlined in the closing pericope of this section 10:14-16. /39/ Eslinger (1985:335) notes that there the uncle's second question in particular opens the door to disclosure of this secret. Note the use of haggîdâ in v 15 and twice in v 16 haggēd higgîd (cf 9:6,8,18, 19) ... yet Saul says (higgîd) nothing of nagid or of the 'kingdom', the first occurrence of the root mlk in this section [cf on 9:16].

The stage is now set for Saul's public acclamation as king.

Spirit of Yahweh

Clearly, the spirit of Yahweh in this section is regarded as the cause of the prophetic band's inspiration and, in turn, of Saul's as he joins in their 'prophesying', however momentarily.

However, in Saul's case, the main function of the prophesying is to provide him with a confirmatory sign that he is indeed Yahweh's chosen and anointed nagid. And in view of the significance of anointing, the onrush of the spirit and the subsequent prophesying can also be regarded here as a sign and seal of Yahweh's contractual commitment to Saul, and, perhaps also to Israel.

The prophesying functioned, furthermore, as an intimation to the people of Saul's new status within the theocracy ("another man", 10:6), though the exact nature of his position remained, as yet, a secret to them. He was not a prophet, his temporary prophetic activity indicating rather - as possible priestly allusions had done earlier (cf 9:24, 10:4) - his status as Yahweh's anointed nagid. *to them?*

In addition to being a confirmatory sign, the spirit may also be regarded in this present section as empowering and enabling Saul for all that lay ahead, not least his military role of delivering Israel from the enemies/Philistines.

Though the prophesying ceased, and there is no indication that it resumed [though see on 19:18ff], the spirit would appear to have continued with Saul, mediating the divine presence (10:7; cf also 16:13-14).

Mention is made of 'another heart' (10:6), but there is no indication that this description entails any moral (or spiritual) renewal of Saul. It would appear to have more to do with Saul's new status.

We have already noted - and questioned - the suggestion that the affusion of the spirit here parallels some of the Judges' texts. However, there would seem to be much closer parallels with the incident in Numbers 11. /40/ The following similarities may be noted /41/:

- intimation is made of the affusion prior to its fulfilment;
- the incidents occurred at (or near) a cultic centre (tent; high place);
- they involved (to some degree) a 'prophetic' figure (Moses; Samuel);
- the immediate result was prophesying;
- the prophesying would appear to have been a one-off event;
- the lasting effect was enabling for a God-given task of leadership

- the endowment was for a subordinate leadership (elders to Moses; Saul to Yahweh)?

Yet, there are a number of differences. In particular:

- Moses' presence and instrumentality; but Samuel's absence [though cf ch 19:18ff];
- in Num 11 a group of seventy share the spirit from the one man Moses, while here one man Saul receives (presumably) the same spirit that inspires the prophetic group;
- no mention is made in Num 11 of any prophetic band, or music.

1 SAMUEL 11:1-15

The next reference to the spirit is found in 11:6 in a section /42/ usually held to represent most closely the circumstances in which Saul became king (cf, e.g., Humphreys, 1982:98).

The episode recorded here is not inconsistent with a secret anointing (9:1-10:16) but R.W. Klein (104) suggests that it is in "considerable tension" with the materials in 10:17-27a. Many commentators go even further and claim that the content of this section shows no acquaintance with the immediately preceding one. This, however, is debatable.

Certainly, it is striking that no mention is made of Saul in the description of the initial exchange between Israelites and Ammonites at Jabesh-gilead (vv 1-3). But this is offset to some extent by the use of the verb "save" (v 3) which recalls for us immediately 10:27 and its (albeit negative) reference to Saul. In the wider context, it also recalls for us the prophetic proclamation of Saul as deliverer in 9:16. Furthermore, in v 4 it seems as though the messengers rush directly to Gibeah to get Saul who is known to Israel and reader alike as king (so, e.g., Hertzberg, 92), although, as several commentators have noted, it is not entirely clear that the local community

looked automatically to Saul for help: "Even the inhabitants of Saul's home town do not consider him, their elected king, as a possible deliverer" (so, Eslinger, 1985: 364).

Scholars have often used Saul's agrarian pursuits in v 5 to further separate this scene from 10:17-27. But it is not entirely implausible that a king should also plough his fields in such a small disjointed kingdom as Israel. Some of the pre-critical commentators, e.g., Poole (538), cite classical parallels. More recently, J.H. Miller (167) compares 2 Kings 3:4 and further suggests that the detail about the oxen is included "not to inform about Saul's station in life but because the oxen play a significant role later in the narrative". Gordon (1984:48) thinks it questionable whether the 'bucolic butcher' of verse 7 would have acted as he did if he was previously unknown among the tribes (similarly J.H. Miller, 168, who regards Saul's action as indicative of an already existing authority).

Miller goes on to pinpoint the source of this authority in the army (10:26), "God's inauguration present to Saul", while Eslinger (1985:368) notes that the reader of v 7 is given a more explicit reason for the people's obedience, 'the fear of Yahweh' /43/. If the people were not aware that Saul was Yahweh's chosen king whom they had acclaimed why should they fear Yahweh when Saul had made the threat? Saul's prime source of authority then is Yahweh himself (so, Birch, 1976:57). As Yahweh's chosen king, Saul must be obeyed.

It has also been objected that kingship here is the result of Saul's leadership in war rather than of the lot (10:20ff) or of the divine oracle (10:22ff). The one, however, need not preclude the other especially if we regard the occasion in ch 11 as Saul's first opportunity to display his mettle and to prove his ability to save (10:27ff) Israel. After all, the plea for a king had been caused by the Philistine threat and we might expect that any designated king would have his military prowess tested.

Several recent studies of kingship both within Israel and in other ANE countries, though differing in many details, have concluded that accession to kingship involved a process (See note /28/). For example, Diana Edelman (198) argues that chapters 9-11 of 1 Samuel "are patterned after the tri-partite ritual of kingship installation used throughout the ANE", the present chapter being an example of the middle "testing" element (cf also Halpern, 1981: 138-145). /44/

One further objection to chapter 11 being a sequel to 10:17-27 is that the public proclamation of Saul's kingship in Gilgal seems redundant after the ceremony in Mizpah, but this misses the point that what happened at Gilgal was the renewal [or, perhaps, "confirmation"; so, Gunn, 1981:92] of the kingdom. /45/

In the present context of chapters 10f, it can be argued that the monarchy was indeed in need of renewal. Whether or not, as Eslinger (1985:378) suggests, it was "dormant because it was not recognised by the people", we can at least say that prior to the incident with the Ammonites it was as yet unproven. Saul's victory in battle, however, changed all that, witnessed to by the definite change in the attitude of the people towards him (cf v 12). The dissidents of Mizpah (10:27) have to eat their own words, while those who failed to recognise him as king (11:1-5) have had a change of heart and now wish publicly to proclaim their allegiance to him.

The Spirit of Yahweh

The accession of the spirit (v 6) was triggered by the news of the shame and reproach being experienced by Saul's fellow-Israelites in Jabesh-gilead as a result of the Ammonite siege and demands.

The verb used to describe the coming of the spirit is slh as used earlier in 10:6 and also in Judges 14:6, 19 and 15:14, all with respect to Samson. This is only one of many

points of contact between this section and several of the narratives in Judges. /46/

We are to understand that it is this accession of the spirit which becomes the motivation for all that follows (so, Birch, 1976:57). The impetus is clearly divine and leads to a number of results.

The immediate effect was the arousal of Saul's anger, presumably as a sign of his spirit possession, as it was also in the case of Samson (Judges 14:19). "The spirit is the efficient cause of wrath" (so, Smith, 1899:78), Saul's anger no doubt reflecting the divine indignation. Consequently, the spirit should be regarded here as the agent of retribution. One might compare the use of rw to describe the divine anger elsewhere (e.g. Ex 15:8, 10; see also above on Num 11:31 pp 23ff; also p 98).

The kindling of Saul's anger was followed by a symbolic cutting of the oxen with which he had been ploughing /47/. This act, which Baldwin (97) thinks was "carefully calculated to be a reminder of the incident recorded in Judges 19", evokes the world of execration and treaty curse.

The slaughtered oxen were then given to messengers who were to summon all Israel to battle. If the messengers here are identical with those of v 4 - as would appear to be the intention of the narrative - the search for a deliverer is transformed into a call to all Israel to follow Saul in the fight against the Ammonites. Saul's bold transformation of the messenger's task carries its own clear message with it - a deliverer has been found (cf also v 9; and v 3)!

The large numbers (v 8) responding to the call may be meant to underscore symbolically the great leadership qualities of Saul (so, R.W. Klein, 107); or to emphasise the wide extent of the response to Saul's call. /48/ Despite the fact that 'lp, usually = 1000, may be understood as denoting a small conscripted unit of men (so, McCarter,

1980a:204), we might well agree with Eslinger's (1985:348) assessment that however the reader understands the numbers he is predisposed by v 7 to understand them as a favourable response to Saul's call. /49/

The ensuing victory, in line with the holy war schema /50/, was complete. As such it was a mark of the legitimacy of Saul's leadership of Israel, which was publicly acknowledged at the ceremony renewing the kingdom at Gilgal (vv 14-15). The spirit which initiated the process which led to victory may, therefore, be regarded as the agent of deliverance as in the narratives of the Judges.

Despite the distinction drawn by Beyerlin, and noted by McCarter (1980a:203) /51/, between the onrush of the divine spirit in ch 10, which he describes as a temporary prophetic charisma, and here, which he regards as an empowerment similar to that given to the judges in their battles against Israel's enemies, there are similarities between the two instances [as, for example, Eslinger (1985:476, n 5); Birch (1976:58); and Mettinger (237) have shown]. In particular, they are both examples of direct divine intervention in Saul's life for the ultimate purpose of making him Yahweh's designate and, as such, Israel's king.

Each manifestation of the spirit has both private and public aspects to it though the emphasis in the first would appear to be more on the private aspect and in the second to be more on the public.

We have already seen (pp 118f above) that the first manifestation of the spirit, though issuing in a public action, was primarily intended as a private verification to Saul of Yahweh's choice of him and presence with him.

This second manifestation, however, while arousing immediately private emotions of anger in Saul, seems to have been intended primarily to provide a public demonstration of his calling (so, Birch, 1971:66, who

describes the present manifestation of the spirit as the "public functioning" of the charisma); so that the overall effect of the double manifestation of the spirit is that both Saul and the people are convinced that he is Yahweh's choice, not only of leader, but of king.

There is also a sense in which what was begun at one spirit manifestation was completed at the second - and this in a double way:

(i) The first manifestation of the spirit issued in the activity of "prophesying" which although observed by the public as intimating something about Saul's new status was not altogether understood by them. With the second manifestation, it became clear that his status was not that of a prophet, but rather of a king, effective in times of military trouble.

(ii) In the context of the first spirit manifestation, intimation was made to Saul of his future role as deliverer of Israel (10:1) and the somewhat cryptic command was issued "do whatever your hand finds to do" (10:7). With this second manifestation of the spirit, the cryptic is made plain and Saul, encouraged by this (what might be described as) 'booster shot', is stirred into acting as the deliverer of his people. /52/

Clearly, then, the two manifestations of the spirit are "linked by the overriding unity of purpose of installing a theocratically designated king in Israel over a people who accept him" (so, Eslinger, 1985:467).

We have seen, then, that the function of the spirit in this section is practically the same as throughout the period of the Judges. /53/ It equips Saul to lead Israel into battle and to victory against her enemy thus bringing deliverance (though the threat of the Philistines remains (9:15, 10:5; etc)). The spirit can, therefore, be regarded as the agent of deliverance and so as a sign of Yahweh's mercy to Israel. At the same time it can be considered as the agent of judgement or retribution and the sign of Yahweh's anger with respect to his people's oppressors. When Yahweh,

through his spirit, moves on behalf of Israel he moves simultaneously against Israel's enemies.

As in the case of Samson, here too it produces anger in the one endowed, no doubt a reflection of the divine indignation.

The spirit also endows Saul with authority as well as with what would appear to be "responsibilities in the sacral/legal realm" (v 13) [so Birch, 1976:62].

1 SAMUEL 16:1-13

The next appearance of the spirit of Yahweh is in chapter 16 - the central chapter of 1 Samuel - which divides into two parts which, though topically distinct are, nevertheless, closely related as Walters (1988:567-589) has shown. Vv 1-13 deal with Yahweh's choice of David to replace Saul as king, climaxing in the anointing of David; while vv 14-23 are concerned with the departure of the spirit of Yahweh from Saul. Youngblood (682) describes the transition at vv 13-14 as "the literary, historical, and theological crux of 1 Samuel as a whole".

The account of David's anointing clearly ends at v 13. It is not so clear where it begins, but we may follow R.W. Klein (158) who suggests that v 1 forms as good a beginning as any, there being a literary allusion in v 1 to Samuel's mourning of 15:35. The mention of the "horn with/ of oil" in vv 1 and 13 also forms an inclusio (so, Kessler, 552).
/54/

In this section David makes his first appearance and although Saul remains king until his death on Gilboa (31:1ff) it is clear that, from this point onwards, it is David who is in the ascendancy. No reason for this is given anywhere in chapter 16 but the narrator has already prepared us for this shift of emphasis throughout chapters 13 to 15. Despite the considerable military successes attributed to Saul in 14:47f - the accounts of two of them

forming the backbone of chapters 13-15 - the dominant feeling in these chapters is not of success, but of failure on Saul's part. Twice (13:8-15; 15:10-35) the prophet Samuel appears to upbraid Saul for his disregard of Yahweh's word and to announce Yahweh's rejection of him and of any possible dynasty (cf especially 13:13-14; 15:23, 26, 28). Saul's rule under Yahweh's aegis ends effectively at this point. It is all neatly summed up in the way that Samuel mourns for Saul (15:35) and is then instructed to anoint a new king of Yahweh's choice (16:1).

Yahweh's rejection of Saul is further underscored in the present passage in his rejection of Eliab (v 7). The wording "I have rejected him" /55/ clearly recalls the similar wording of v 1 and makes the comparison with Saul unmistakable. Furthermore, it is made clear that the criterion of physical appearance which set Saul apart from the rest of Israel (9:2; 10:23) is expressly repudiated here.

Throughout this passage it is emphasised that Saul is to be replaced with Yahweh's choice of candidate. /56/ This is clear from the very wording of v 1, especially "I have provided" (where "provided" = "seen" in vv 6ff); and "for myself" /57/. It is further underlined by Samuel's initial reluctance to become involved, fearing Saul's wrath (v 2) /58/; and by the fact that Samuel was to do only what Yahweh would tell him (v 3) [though Samuel seemed to have ignored this when he saw Eliab (v 6) /59/].

That David in particular was indeed Yahweh's choice is further witnessed to throughout this pericope in the decision of the lot (vv 7ff) /60/; the sovereign choice of the youngest [smallest?] (v 11) /61/; the fact he was a shepherd (v 11) /62/; his beauty (v 12) [despite v 7] /63/; the anointing; and the accession of the spirit (v 13).

That Yahweh is replacing Saul with David may also be evident in what appears to be a conscious reflection here of the story of Saul's election by lottery (10:17-27a).

Certainly, as Mettinger (175) has shown, vv 6ff are reminiscent of the earlier episode in a number of ways. If Samuel is not using the lot in examination of Jesse's sons, he is using something similar which gives 'yes' and 'no' answers. Moreover, David, like Saul, is missing at the climactic moment and must be brought in from offstage. Finally, there are connections in vocabulary between the two passages, for example, the use of bhr, 'choose' in reference to Yahweh's election of a king (10:24; 16:8,9,10).

The overall intention of the narrator in all this is surely to emphasise the fact that David was anointed by the full authority of God's will, and not by the decision of the man Samuel.

Only here in v 13 and in 19:18 are David and Samuel brought into direct contact with one another. This fact and the striking omission of any reference to David's anointing by Yahweh in the HDR have led many to question the historical basis of the account. What is more, David is reported to have been anointed by the men of Judah (2 Sam 2:4) and by the elders of Israel (2 Sam 5:3), with no mention there that he had been previously anointed by Yahweh.

However, Weisman (1976:385ff) has argued that the two types of anointing detected by Kutsch (Salbung als Rechtsakt, BZAW 87, Berlin: Topelmann, 1963) are complementary parts of a process of king-making: the sacral anointing by Yahweh (or representative) being a rite of nomination or designation followed later by the actual public anointing by the people which constitutes the actual installation or coronation (See p 127 above and also note /28/).

Moreover, as we have seen earlier (pp 115f above), Mettinger argues that anointing has a contractual meaning. The person(s) performing the anointing pledged themselves to the recipient and were obligated to him. This insight helps to clarify the distinction between secular and sacral anointing. The secular anointing can now be understood as

the people's way of pledging fidelity to the king; while the sacral anointing expresses not only Yahweh's choice of but also his obligation to the monarch /64/. And surely this in particular is the function of the anointing account in the present context. It places the whole following context under an umbrella of divine promise and blessing (so, R.W. Klein, 159).

It has often been noted that the story of David's anointing forms a parallel to the anointing of Saul as nagid; Miller (1974:171) even suggesting that it has been "influenced by, or perhaps even patterned after" the account of Saul's. Weisman (1976:378), for example, suggests the following parallels:

- a) a divine instruction to the prophet preceding the anointing (9:15-16; 16:1ff);
- b) the anointing performed by a prophet (10:1; 16:13) by pouring oil on the head of the designate [although there is a difference in the vessels used];
- c) it comes as a surprise to the designate (9:21b; 16:11);
- d) it is carried out at an occasional place where the designate happens to be, and not necessarily in a central sanctuary
- e) it involves privacy (9: 26-27) or at least secrecy (16:2ff) /65/;
- f) it is followed by the sudden appearance of the spirit of Yahweh upon the anointed (10:6, 10; 16:13)

In addition, we might note the context of sacrifice [vv 2-5; cf 9:12ff, 22ff]. Weisman (1976:380) goes on to acknowledge that there are literary differences between the two stories concerning the way that these elements were applied and interrelated. But "basically they present the same ritual structure, and the same concept as far as the divine choice of the king is concerned."

The Spirit of Yahweh

As with Saul (10:1,9) the external application of oil was followed by an affusion of the spirit of Yahweh, no doubt to equip and empower (so, e.g., Humphreys 1982:105) the

anointed for the task laid upon him, though no explicit mention is made of that here.

There are, however, several differences between the two accounts of the spirit endowment. Unlike Saul, David is not informed that the spirit will come upon him; neither does he prophesy. Indeed, there is no indication of any immediate effect of the spirit on his life and no explicit indication that David, or for that matter his brothers, would have been aware of the spirit's coming upon him (other than perhaps the use of the verb slh). This, however, may simply be due to the structuring of the present text and the narrator's desire to inform us of the clear evidence of Saul's final rejection by Yahweh (vv 14ff). /66/ Furthermore, there is no mention of David's being 'turned into another man' (cf 10:6) or receiving 'another heart' (10:9), although in 13:14 he is proleptically described as "a man after [Yahweh's] own heart". Also, only once do we read of the spirit coming upon David. /67/

On the other hand, the affusion of the spirit is more closely related to David's anointing than was the case with Saul. In addition we are informed that it was 'from that day forward'. It was permanent, never departing from him (as it did from Saul, v 14) /68/. These factors would seem to demonstrate the superiority of David's spirit endowment over Saul's, not that he was given a different type of spirit but rather that Yahweh's commitment to David and relationship with him are in this way depicted as being deeper and more permanent.

David was now king de jure dei; the following chapters describe how he became king de facto.

1 SAMUEL 16:14-23

This pericope begins in v 14 with the one-time departure of the spirit of Yahweh from Saul; it ends in v 23 with the notice of the repeated departure of the evil spirit from Saul as David played. It is set between accounts of David's

anointing and his fight with the Philistine giant and recounts the way in which David was brought into Saul's court.

Though it is often conjectured that the accounts of the divine (vv 1-13) and the royal (vv 14-23) selection of David have passed through a separate history of tradition, nevertheless, there are literary ties or allusions between the two accounts. In both, David is said to be among the flock (11 and 19); "see" is used in the sense of "select"; and David's name is mentioned only at a climactic moment (vv 13 and 19) [cf Walters (1988:572-3)]. While the account of David's anointing ends with the gift of the spirit, the account of Saul's selection of David begins with the note that the spirit of Yahweh had left the king and an evil spirit now afflicted him.

The effect of placing vv 1-13 and vv 14-23 in juxtaposition is to underscore on the one hand David's approval both by Yahweh and his predecessor; and on the other hand Saul's rejection by Yahweh (and, yet, David's loyalty to Saul).

This rejection of Saul (see on vv 1ff, p 132 above) continues to be underlined both by the opening intimation of the departure of the spirit of Yahweh from him and also by the arrival of an evil spirit to torment him - a major theme in this section [cf vv 14, 15, 16, 23 [x2]; forming a kind of inclusio (v 14; v 23)]. It is further underscored by the rise of David. In particular we might note the providential /69/ choice of David as musician to relieve Saul (v 18), and his success in this task (v 23).

We might also note the other high qualifications attributed to David in v 18 anticipating in part his activities in chapters 17-20 /70/. He is described as being: a "mighty man of valour" (cf on 9:1); and a "man of war", thus skilled in or, at least, training for combat /71/; "of good presence" (cf on v 12); and "skilled in speech", like the ideal Israelite hero clever with words, as the stories of Jacob, Joseph, Esther, Daniel, etc (except Moses) show.

However, David's most outstanding qualification is that "Yahweh is with him" (cf 18:12, 14, 28 and 2 Sam 5:10; and in addition 17:37 and 20:13). "This part of the description explains all of the previous parts" (so, McCarter, 1980a: 281). We might compare 10:7 where immediately after the promise of the spirit Saul is also assured of God's presence with him. Perhaps we should regard Yahweh's presence [and the other qualifications mentioned here?] as one of the (abiding) results of the affusion of the spirit.

Saul's immediate acceptance of David [see on note /71/] and his attachment to him (vv 19ff) /72/ are also of great importance here, anticipating Jonathan's response (18:1) and that of the population at large (18:16). Indeed, more may be involved here than a simple matter of personal friendship. Thompson (1974), building on earlier work by Moran /73/ ascribed political overtones to the word "love" in v 21. Similarly, McCarter (1980a:282) is of the opinion that some kind of "official recognition" or "legal commitment" is alluded to.

Ironically, Saul, not only took into his court the man who was designated to succeed him, but also - however unwittingly - became dependent upon him, (so Gunn, 1981: 101). "David is shown to have the upper hand as befits God's new servant."

Spirit of Yahweh

We are told in v 14 that "the spirit of Yahweh" departed from Saul". R.W. Klein (165) deduces from this that Saul's earlier experience of the spirit (10:10; 11:6) must have been for a brief moment. However, it seems rather that the spirit of Yahweh had been with Saul from the day of his anointing until this point (so, Hertzberg, 140). It is (ts?) once-for-all [though cf 19:20ff] departure now underscores his rejection by Yahweh, just as its donation had been a confirmatory sign of his divine election and nomination by Yahweh. We are surely to understand that, as a consequence of this departure of the spirit, Yahweh was no longer with

Saul (contrast v 18 with respect to David), and so no longer enabling and equipping him to fulfil his role as king. This would seem to be confirmed in the subsequent narrative. We might note, for example, the emphasis in 17:11 on Saul's dismay and fear when faced with the might of Goliath; and compare the experience of Samson (Judges 16:20) who was left powerless after Yahweh's departure from him. /74/

Almost (if not) simultaneously with the departure of the spirit of Yahweh, an evil spirit appears on the scene to torment Saul by taking the place of the spirit of Yahweh, "as though rushing into a vacuum left by the departure of the other spirit" (so, McCarter, 1980b:503). The (inverse) parallelism here surely makes clear that what is intended is not a bad attitude or guilty conscience as, for example, Caird (1969) suggests, but rather ^{something} of the same kind of order as the spirit of Yahweh. /75/ = what?

What's the difference?

We are told that this evil spirit is "from Yahweh" (m¹t yhw). However, it is unlikely that it is to be identified with the "spirit of Yahweh", as Briggs (141) and Gunn (1981:102) hold and as McCarter's further comments /76/ seem to suggest, for this would tend to make nonsense of the very intentional contrasting parallel that there seems to be between the spirits in v 14. /77/ The fact that the evil spirit is said to be "from Yahweh" may simply reflect the tendency of the OT to trace both good and evil back to Yahweh (cf Job 2:10). /78/ It clearly implies that the evil spirit will play its part in the outworking of Yahweh's purposes and that becomes evident here as its effects on Saul create the circumstances in which Yahweh's nominee is brought into the court circle.

Whether or not Saul was conscious of the presence of the evil spirit at work in his experience, his courtiers noticed a change in his personality, perhaps indicating that his ability to rule was now in question. Just as the spirit of Yahweh had enabled Saul to function as king, so now the evil spirit was beginning to disable him. [Howard

(482) draws a parallel between Saul and Abimelech (Judges 9) here, "both of whom proved to be unworthy candidates for the office of king in Israel".]

Many commentators describe Saul's condition here in terms of mental illness, but, although he does, indeed, appear to manifest some symptoms of such illness, surely Hertzberg (140) is correct in stressing the fact that "Saul's suffering is described theologically, not psychologically or psychopathetically". As Baldwin (123) notes, these signs of mental illness appear "only after the confrontations with Samuel over the question of obedience to the divine command", suggesting that his illness was due to his rebellion against God. Certainly, he was held responsible for his actions and later regarded himself as responsible (1 Sam 24:16-21; 26:21). His disobedience lost him the spirit, presence and help of Yahweh, and brought him instead the hindering effects of an 'injurious' (so, Baldwin, 122; Howard, 482 n 36) spirit sent from God. In this sense it may be possible to describe the 'evil spirit' as bringing the punishment of Yahweh to bear on Saul. It is the agent of Yahweh's judgement. [Compare Judges 9:23, though there the evil spirit is not said to come upon Abimelech but rather interposes itself between him and the men of Shechem].

If we are entitled to see a contractual significance in anointing (as Mettinger has posited, see pp 115f, 133f above), perhaps we can regard the evil spirit here as bringing to bear upon Saul the sanctions of a broken contract.

The evil spirit was not a permanent feature of Saul's experience. It could be persuaded to depart (v 23) by David's skilful playing of the lyre, leaving Saul 'refreshed' [= rwḥ, a pun on rwḥ = spirit] - but only to return again and again. McCarter (1980a:281) notes that reliance on the apotropaic function of music was common to every ancient society confronted by demons. But perhaps there is some reflection here on the fact that the music of

the lyre has already been seen to be a catalyst for prophetic groups - and for Saul - to have an ecstatic experience (1 Sam 10:5; cf 2 Kgs 3:15). Music which played such a part in the context in which the spirit of Yahweh had come upon Saul, now helps to drive the evil spirit from him (cf Parker, 281, n 26).

Saul, then, deserted by Yahweh's empowering spirit, has become a pitiable figure, disturbed by frequent attacks of an evil spirit from God, and dependent on his eventual successor, David for relief.

The next two spirit texts pertain to the evil spirit introduced here in Saul's experience (18:10 and 19:9). We shall consider these before turning to the final mention of Yahweh's spirit in relation to him.

Chapter 18:10-11

The evil spirit mentioned in 18:10 is found in a section 18:6-30 which forms a sequel to David's defeat of the Philistine giant in 17:1-54. Following on this triumph Saul's son was so impressed that he presented the young hero with his robe and armour (18:3-4). Meanwhile, the women "of all the cities of Israel" celebrated with great adulation. (18:6-7). Saul reacted with anger and jealousy (v 9). The following day an evil spirit is reported to have rushed on him (v 10) with the result that Saul attempted to kill David.

Vv 10-11 are lacking in LXXb, and are in measure paralleled in 19:9-10, leading many commentators to regard them as secondary additions by MT, modelled on 19:9-10 (cf Willis, 308ff, for a review) /79/. Even if this is so as, for example, R.W. Klein (185, 188) suggests, they seem to be included here in order to heighten Saul's hostility to David. /80/ However, v 10a appears to be more closely related to 10:10 than to 19:9a. We might note, in particular, the verbal affinities with the use of slh and ytnby¹, and also, with Hertzberg (157), btwk(m). This

would seem to suggest that there is a conscious recalling of 10:10 here, the verbal similarities, no doubt, being intended to suggest similarities between the external manifestations of the spirit-possession on these two occasions.

In the present context, however, RSV is surely right in translating ytnby' in a negative sense as "raved", even though the same word is translated in chapter 10 as "prophesying", which is there viewed positively /81/. "Here at least, it would appear, all are agreed that yitnabbē' has nothing to do with prophecy" (so, Parker, 280f). Identical terminology is in this instance being used to point up the contrast in the significance of the two types of spirit possession. We can agree with Blenkinsopp (1975:92) that "this is not part of a wider polemic against orgiastic prophecy" - which would have involved Samuel also (cf 19:18) - but a quite specific polemic against Saul.

In chapter 10 Saul had received the spirit of Yahweh as he followed Yahweh's guidance in the matters of nagidship and kingdom (10:16). Here, however, it was his anger and jealousy of David - Yahweh's anointed - in the matter of the kingdom (18:9) which left him open to possession by an evil spirit. Again, in ch 10 the 'prophesying', though intimating to the public some, as yet, unclear change in Saul's status, was in particular a confirmatory sign to Saul himself that he was Yahweh's chosen one, assured of Yahweh's presence and help and that the kingdom was to be his. Here, it would appear that the effects of the evil spirit upon Saul are indicative of another change in his status; a sign - not only to those around him (cf 16:15) but also to himself? (cf v 12) - that the former promises and blessings no longer obtain. And if we are correct in regarding the accession of the spirit in 10:10 as a sign of Yahweh's contractual commitment to Saul we might similarly regard the accession of the evil spirit here as a sign of the outworking of the sanctions of a broken contract or, at least, the ending of the contractual arrangement and relationship forged at the anointing. The use of ytnby' in

the present narrative emphasises the reversal of Saul's rise to power (so, Parker, 281, n 25).

Saul's assassination attempt on David with his spear indicates the deterioration in Saul's condition since the evil spirit first began to afflict him in chapter 16 and underlines his increasing inability to rule. "From this point on the negative side of his character comes increasingly into view" (so, Gunn, 1981:102).

Perhaps, we should also regard this assassination attempt as a perversion of the spirit's role in chapter 11:6 where its enabling power issues in Saul's military success against Israel's enemies. /82/ In that chapter, the accession of the spirit was triggered by the news of the shame and reproach being experienced by Saul's fellow-Israelites as a result of military failure against their enemy, the Ammonites. Here, in contrast, it is triggered by Israel's military victory over their enemies and by their adulation of their leader David. Again, in chapter 11, the effect of the spirit endowment was the arousal of Saul's anger against Israel's enemy. Here, it is his own personal anger against Yahweh's anointed which leaves him open to invasion by an evil spirit which seeks the destruction of Israel's future king. However, the success which attended Saul's military exploits in chapter 11, eluded him here (v 11), surely because "Yahweh was with [David] but had departed from Saul" (v 12). It would appear that the evil spirit is less powerful than the spirit of Yahweh.

Regardless of what Saul tries to do against David he is frustrated. Whether Saul's actions are "motivated by goodwill (16:21-22), fear and suspicion, or downright malice (18:20-27), they all contribute to David's success" (so, McCarter, 1980a:313). "Every move Saul makes against David only enhances his rival's prospects" (so, Gunn, 1981: 102).

1 SAMUEL 19:1-24

The evil spirit appears again in 19:9-10 /83/ which constitutes one of a series of four escape incidents in chapter 19: vv 1-7, 9-10, 11-17, 18-24. These units seem to follow a pattern, the units involving: a child of Saul (male): a spirit (evil): a child of Saul (female): a spirit (God's). This adds to the measure of redactional unity displayed by these distinct units, which in various ways make Saul look bad, either immediately or through later incidents.

This is clearly so in vv 9-10 where the placement of these verses is particularly damaging to the reputation of Saul. Since the reconciliation between him and David (v 7) brought about through the efforts of his son Jonathan, the only reported event had been David's success in the continuing Philistine war (v 8). In particular, we might note that no mention is made of any 'glorification' of David as in 18:7. Saul appears to have reacted against the victory itself, making his (second) assassination attempt on David look all the more dire. Saul's degeneration is thus seen to be accelerating, so much so that, in order to elude further attacks from Saul's spear "David fled and escaped". /84/

It is interesting to compare and contrast this incident with 11:6 and also with the Judges' material (e.g. Judges 6:33f; 11:12f), where often, as we have seen, the accession of the spirit of Yahweh follows on a fresh threat posed by the enemy of Israel and leads to an attack against that enemy. Here, David - and not the 'Philistines' (v 8) - is Saul's perceived 'enemy' [Contrast 9:16: "He shall save my people from the hand of the Philistines"]. Bereft of the spirit of Yahweh and possessed by an evil spirit, Saul has lost his bearings regarding as evil that which is good and fighting against Yahweh's purposes.

However, as we noted on 18:10-11, possessed by the evil spirit, Saul does not enjoy the success he once enjoyed

while endowed with the spirit of Yahweh. R.W. Klein (196) attributes this lack of success to the evilness of the spirit possessing Saul. /85/ However, in view of the contractual significance of anointing, we should perhaps regard it, rather, as the consequence of Yahweh's presence with (cf 18:12; etc) and protection of his newly anointed David (For this idea of the inviolability of Yahweh's anointed see 1 Sam 24:6; etc.).

We turn now to the final occurrence of the spirit of God in the experience of Saul, recorded for us in 19:18-24. /86/

It has been suggested that these verses are a doublet of 10:10ff, and, in particular, that v 24 is a doublet of 10:12. There is no doubt that the passages are related. Stoebe /87/, for example, traces the following common themes in 9:1-10:16 and 19:18-24: Saul and David go to Samuel in the respective stories, with the former mentioning the high place and the latter "the camps"; Samuel is the head of a sacrificial group in ch 9 and of a prophetic band in ch 19; in both accounts Saul is possessed by the spirit and behaves ecstatically. To these we might add the three-fold delegation (vv 20-21) which some have regarded as being in some way parallel to the three signs of 10:2-7. /88/

There are, however, very obvious differences between the two passages: Saul was guided unwittingly by Yahweh to his meeting with Samuel, whereas, here, David seeks him out quite deliberately; and here the threefold delegation sought out David who remained with Samuel, while in ch 10 Saul met them after leaving Samuel. Most importantly, the effect and significance of the spirit accession and subsequent 'prophesying' is quite different in each passage, thus showing that the point of the narratives is quite different.

In ch 10 the accession of the spirit and subsequent prophesying, which signified Yahweh's presence with Saul, meant that Saul could do whatever the occasion demanded,

while here they lead to his lying naked and powerless on the ground, no longer able to pursue his mission of apprehending David. Again, in ch 10 the spirit and prophesying are a confirming sign that Saul has been anointed king, while here, followed as they are by the divesting of his clothes before Samuel, they seem to offer one further confirmation that Yahweh is no longer with him, his kingship being at an end. It is likely that Saul's disrobing is intended as a symbolic divestiture of his regal office, similar to that of Jonathan in 18:4 but with one major difference: Jonathan's action was a voluntary outflow of his love for David, while Saul's activity here was the involuntary result of possession by the spirit of Yahweh. What was given to Saul through his first encounter with the prophetic band is, through this second and final encounter, seen to have been taken from him. He is left naked - without clothes /89/, power, dignity or authority. He is clearly no longer that '[an]other man' with 'another heart' of chap 10, nor is he just his old self again, he is less of a man than he was prior to his anointing by Samuel. And this takes place "before Samuel" (v 24) /90/, confirming his earlier judgement (cf 15:28). *He is another man?*

These differences have led some commentators - surely rightly - to the conclusion that the incident recorded here is to be regarded as an ironic comment on Saul's life story and almost a parody of 10:10-12. Jobling (1986a:18), for example, considers the present passage as a "satirical recapitulation" of the earlier passage: "Saul's previous visit to Samuel, and his first experience of prophesying, showed him as the elected one on his way to the height of fortune; the recapitulation shows the rejected one far gone in degradation". Mauchline (144) seems to have missed this dimension of the story altogether, regarding it instead as an "interlude of sanity and freedom [for Saul] from the evil spirit". But, it seems to be underlined by the fact that 10:11-12 and the present section form a kind of bracket around the narrative descriptions of Saul's first and last encounters with Samuel as well as with the spirit of God. "The first comes just before he attains kingship,

the last just before his full descent from kingship into madness and death" (so, Humphreys, 1982:116, n 41). ?

In the present context of this chapter with its record of four incidents in which David escapes Saul's intention to kill him (cf v 1), we note that here David is able to make his escape due to the help of the spirit of God /91/ which is seen clearly to be operating in his interests rather than those of Saul. "The spirit of Yahweh neutralises Saul's attempts to apprehend David, so it transpires that David enjoys a sacrosanctity which Yahweh himself is underwriting" (so, Gordon, 1986:164; and cf on the inviolability of the anointed, p 144 above).

We have seen that the question "Is Saul among the prophets?" has a positive connotation in chap 10, the prophesying itself being regarded in a positive light. Here, however, many commentators view the prophesying negatively. Wilson (1979:334), for example, regards the experience of Saul here as showing "that typical prophetic behaviour is evaluated negatively. It is uncontrolled and incapacitating". It may, however, be only the prophesying of Saul and his messengers that is regarded negatively here and not the activity of 'prophesying' per se, especially when one remembers the close association that Samuel is said to have with these prophets as their 'head' (v 20).

In our study of Numbers 11 (p 35 above) we noted that some scholars have sought to differentiate between the use of the niph^cal and the hithpa^cēl of the verb nby¹: the niph^cal supposedly referring to the 'delivering of prophetic oracles'; and the hithpa^cēl to the 'exhibiting of characteristic prophetic behaviour' - a differentiation which Wilson (1979:334) makes in this passage, between the activity of the 'company of the prophets' (niph^cal in v 20a) and that of Saul and his messengers (hithpa^cēl in vv 20b, 21 (x2), 23 and 24). It is, however, doubtful if such a differentiation is in general competent. We might note, for example, that in 10:5 the hithpa^cēl participle is used with regard to the activity of the 'band of prophets'. ?

Nevertheless, it is possible that, in the present context, the narrator uses the different verbal forms quite intentionally to distinguish the activity of Saul and his messengers from that of the 'company of the prophets'. We seem to have a further hint of this distinction in the additional information provided in v 24. The double inclusion of the words "he too", regarded by many commentators as glosses, suggests that the messengers too had stripped as they prophesied. There is, however, no reason to believe that this was the way the 'company of the prophets' behaved.

Moreover, there is a further significant distinction to be made between Saul and the prophetic band - and, indeed, between the Saul of ch 19 and the Saul of ch 10 - namely, his relationship to Yahweh and his purposes, just prior to the experience of ecstatic prophesying. This seems to be recognised by McCarter (1980a:329) when he comments: "In contrast to the encounter described in 10:10-12, here [Saul] meets the prophetic troop as an unwelcome intruder, indeed as an enemy. He is now more a victim of prophetic inspiration than a beneficiary of it; he participates in the prophesying as a sufferer, an invalid, and the ecstasy is for him a disease." This is also most likely the reason for the use of 'spirit of God' rather than 'spirit of Yahweh' in this section. When these points are kept in focus, it is less likely that prophesying per se is here to be regarded in a bad light. It is rather the prophesying of Saul and his messengers that is regarded negatively. *perhaps, but not obviously so*

This in itself may help to explain the introduction of the proverb at the end of the chapter: "Is Saul also among the prophets?" Whatever the original intention of this proverb (cf the discussion on 10:10-12 above, pp 121ff), we have seen that its earlier use in this book presented us with a positive evaluation of Saul, confirming his anointing and pointing, however cryptically at first, to his new public status. The evaluation of Saul in the present context is, however, clearly negative, though even here the proverbial question has a certain ambiguity about it.

Wilson (1980:183), for example, views it as implying a negative answer, "No, Saul is no prophet; he is insane". Similarly, McKane (124) who has suggested that the two occurrences of the proverb represent two different evaluations of Saul vis-à-vis the ecstasies: on the first occasion they were not fit company for him, whereas now he is not fit company for them. Others, however, regard the proverb as implying a positive answer - "Yes, he was numbered among the ecstatic prophets" - while at the same time viewing these prophets in a bad light, so that it is bad news to be numbered among them.

However, we have already seen above that it is most likely not prophesying per se that is viewed negatively but only the prophesying of Saul and his messengers. If that is the case, then, this section may not be offering an alternative context for the origin of the proverbial saying. Instead, as Gordon (1986:165) has suggested, it may be "pointing out how fraught with irony that saying is when the full story ✓ of Saul is told". For there is surely a sense in which, in each case, the proverb intimates the public's recognition that there was something new - though not as yet clearly defined - about Saul's status. In chapter 10, it indicated that Yahweh's hand was upon him for good, though what that might mean in the long-term [his kingship] was as yet hidden from them. Here, it indicated that Yahweh's hand was against him, so that they puzzled over the long-term significance of this change in his fortunes [his loss of the kingdom].

A few commentators (e.g., Briggs, 141; R.W. Klein, 198; Wilson, 1979:335; and Snaith, 1944:156) have suggested that the 'spirit' mentioned in this section may have been the evil spirit from God previously referred to. There seems to me, however, to be a basic difference between the effect of the spirit in each of these cases. In addition to the fact that the adjective "evil" is absent from this passage as a description of the spirit, there is also the further point that in 18:10 the evil spirit incites Saul to evil, seeking the destruction and death of David; while here the spirit

prevents Saul from pursuing an intended evil course and, far from seeking David's destruction, saves him (his life, liberty, etc).

Though the spirit of God, then, cannot be identified with the evil spirit, it is something else to say, with Gunn (1981: 103), that "the spirit of prophecy functions like the spirit of evil" in that both appear - though in different ways - to be "weapons in the hand of God". There is a measure of truth in this in that each enhances the progress of disintegration in Saul's experience, although, on the other hand, as we have seen already, the spirit of God does not move Saul to evil against David in the way in which the evil spirit does.

[Before we close our discussion of this section we must note that the seeming contagiousness of the prophesying provides a link with the Numbers narrative (cf Num 11:26), particularly in the case of Saul himself who was "infected" by the spirit before he came to the "camps" and into the actual presence of Samuel or the prophets (cf Num 11:26).]

As the chapter closes and we take our leave of Saul we see him, "neither legitimate king nor genuine prophet ... continu[ing] to stumble toward his doom at the hands of the Philistines, when he will be "stripped" of his garments for the last time (31:8-9)" (so, Youngblood, 717).

Summary

In this chapter, more than in either of the earlier chapters of our study, we have seen how the influence of the spirit of Yahweh is directly related to the main theme or "subject" of the book as a whole, which is, in this case, "the shift in Israel's leadership from prophet-judges of Samuel's type to kings, and especially dynastic kings", (so, Rosenberg, 122). The role of the spirit in bringing dynastic kingship to Israel is inextricably tied up with its role in relation to the individuals accessed and

endowed by it for kingship, so that we can say that, at one level, the function of the spirit of Yahweh is **to promote the move towards dynastic kingship for Israel**. At the same time, it also functions **to promote the fulfilment of the promise (of the land, vis-a-vis Philistine and other incursions)**, the whole matter of which had been left in abeyance since the days of Jephthah [though see 7:12-14 and pp 108ff above].

Samuel on whom the early part of the book focusses and who is regarded as the last of the judges, is not specifically described as having the spirit but, nevertheless, that certainly seems to be implied, both in his headship of the 'company of the prophets' (19:20) who prophesied under the inspiration of the spirit, and also in his mediating role in the anointing of both Saul and David. His function has many parallels with that of Moses in the Numbers incident.

In the experience of the company of the prophets, the spirit is surely to be regarded as **the inspiration behind their prophesying** which may have entailed ecstasy of some sort but was not incapacitating (10:5).

It is made quite explicit in chapter 10 that Saul's first experience of the spirit which led him immediately to prophesy, was given to him as **a personal, legitimating (or confirmatory) "sign"** of his being Yahweh's chosen nagid. In a similar way, we should regard his second experience of the spirit (11:6), which eventuated in victory over the Ammonites, as being **a public legitimation of his new status as Yahweh's nagid** and Israel's deliverer. But we have seen that the spirit can equally well function **to delegitimize** (ch 19) the unworthy ruler. As far as David is concerned, we are not told explicitly that the accession of the spirit functions as a personal legitimating sign, but perhaps this is implicit in the story. ?

The close relationship between anointing and spirit accession - closer in the case of David - suggests that the spirit is **a token of Yahweh's contractual commitment to his**

chosen king [and to the nation over which he rules?] who becomes in measure sacrosanct or inviolable as a result of the experience - witness 24:6, 10; etc and Saul's repeated but failed attempts on David's life.

Though Saul's "prophecy" is momentary, **the spirit remains** with him for some time **mediating the divine presence**, and **empowering and enabling him for all entailed in his being nagid/ king**, not least his military role (10:7; 11:7ff) and judicial functions (11:13). However, his later experience (ch 16ff) makes clear that that presence and help could be - and was in fact - removed [because of his disobedience]. Indeed, the spirit even functions in ch 19 as the disabler of Saul [and those under his commission]. For David, the implication seems to be that he was guaranteed an abiding, divine presence, protection and enabling from the moment of his anointing onwards. *so explicit difference?*

There is some overlap with the function of the spirit in the Book of Judges particularly in the military realm, for Saul is anointed and equipped to be the deliverer of Israel (9:16; 10:5; 11:7ff). In this sense the spirit can once again be regarded as **the agent of deliverance/ salvation** (ch 11) and as **a token of Yahweh's mercy towards Israel**. At the same time the spirit also functions as **the agent of judgement [and the sign of Yahweh's anger?]** with respect to **the enemies of God's people** (11:6ff).

We are not given much information as to how the spirit was communicated to those accessed by it. Saul's first endowment came on contact with the prophetic band as happened later in the experience of his messengers (19:20). However, it is not clear whether there was any physical contact - as, for example, with the laying on of hands - through which the spirit was mediated, but it may have been immediate and spontaneous as was clearly the case in 19:23, and also in 11:6. David's endowment with the spirit seems to have been simultaneous with the moment of anointing.

Why should it?

Once again, it would appear that **the spirit did not effect any moral transformation** in those accessed. "At this stage of Israel's experience and reflection there does not yet appear an explicit ethical dimension to the working of the spirit" (so, Imbelli, 475). Saul's conversion to "another man" with "another heart" (10:6, 9) seems to have reference only to his new status as Yahweh's nagid. The fact that he was endowed with the spirit did not keep him from disobedience to Yahweh [compare Gideon, Jephthah and Samson].

In 1 Samuel, the spirit of Yahweh is still confined to a small group - the leader of the people and a small band of prophets.

The concept of **an evil spirit** which raised its head in Judges 9 plays a significant part in the experience of Saul from the moment of David's spirit endowment onwards. This evil spirit should not be thought of as a contemporary description of mental illness, or of a bad human attitude (against Eppstein, 302) or guilty conscience, but rather theologically as a phenomenon similar to, and of the same order as, the spirit of Yahweh. *ep/le in*

It first appears in Saul's experience at the moment of David's anointing and spirit-endowment. As the spirit of Yahweh comes upon David, it simultaneously leaves Saul and into the vacuum created in Saul's experience comes the evil spirit.

Clearly, the evil spirit is a less powerful and successful phenomenon than the spirit of Yahweh. It cannot co-exist with the spirit of Yahweh but only has influence where the spirit of Yahweh has departed, and success where it is not fighting against Yahweh's anointed - witness David's repeated escapes from the murderous intentions of the evil-spirit-motivated Saul.

The evil spirit is **not to be identified with the spirit of Yahweh**, as some scholars have contended, but, nevertheless,

it is described as being "from Yahweh", and so, under his sovereign control, **functions to the outworking of Yahweh's purposes**, for example, by creating the circumstances in which Yahweh's newly designated king is brought into the court circle (16:14ff); and by disabling Saul and making his inability to rule increasingly obvious to others, so that when it results in his "raving [= prophesying]", it indicates another change in Saul's status - he is no longer the anointed king!

In its function of undoing all that was effected by the spirit of Yahweh at the time of Saul's anointing, the evil spirit can be described as the **agent of Yahweh's judgement** against the man who has become the enemy of Yahweh's anointed - the enemy, this time from within [much as the 'wind' functioned as the agent of judgement against the 'rabble' in Numbers 11].

The evil spirit was **not a permanent feature** of Saul's life. It could be persuaded to depart by David's musical abilities, only to return again and again.

CONCLUSION

In each of our three studies we have seen that the spirit of Yahweh functions to promote the progress of Yahweh's purpose for Israel and so also the fulfilment of the promise of the land which is jeopardised, on occasion, by an external enemy but also, on occasion, by elements within Israel itself.

To this end, the spirit of Yahweh appears often as the agent of blessing and deliverance whether for the individual (especially Samson and David) or, more often, for Israel as a whole. Throughout the period of the judges (but see also 1 Sam 11:6ff) the spirit of Yahweh initiates the whole process that leads eventually to victory over the oppressor and to the re-establishment of peace in the land. Because of this the giving of the spirit is also a clear evidence of Yahweh's mercy towards (an often wholly undeserving) Israel.

At the same time the spirit often functions as the agent of judgement with respect to Israel's enemies, sometimes creating an anger in the spirit-possessed that seems to reflect the divine indignation.

Some individuals appear as permanent bearers of the spirit, in particular, Moses, though perhaps also Samuel and the 'company of the prophets' (10:5). In the case of the prophets the spirit of Yahweh is the source of their prophesying, which would appear to include ecstatic experiences and, also, perhaps, prophetic utterances although there is no clear evidence for the latter.

When those chosen for leadership roles prophesy, this activity would appear to be momentary and temporary, indicating not a prophetic calling but rather their new status as servants of Yahweh in the field of (civil)

leadership. Here the spirit functions as a (most often, personal) legitimating sign of their new role. Similarly, the spirit endowment of the deliverers in the Book of Judges (cf also 1 Sam 11:6) - or possibly the ensuing victory? - functions as a public legitimation of their new status. In Saul's case, his final encounter with the divine spirit seems to function as a delegitimizing sign, marking his rejection by Yahweh.

Though the prophesying of these newly designated or appointed leaders is temporary, there is every reason to believe that the spirit remains with them, mediating to them the divine presence and also equipping and enabling them to fulfil their new role in Israel - whether in the military, judicial, religious, or other spheres. The same is true of the judges whose donation with the spirit is described as a one-off measure. [Although Samson never led an army into battle, the individual, personal feats of extraordinary physical strength which followed on his spirit endowment can be regarded as the beginning of Yahweh's plan of attack against the Philistines.]

Because of the significance of anointing, and further because of the close connection between anointing and spirit possession - particularly in the experience of David - the spirit can be regarded as a token of Yahweh's contractual commitment to his chosen king [and to Israel?], who becomes sacrosanct as a result of the endowment.

Again, Saul's final encounter with the spirit seems to function in the exact opposite way, disabling him and stripping him not only of his ability to pursue his evil intentions with respect to David, but also stripping him both of his ability to rule and also (symbolically) of his office. His experience [and that of Samson?] shows that it was possible for the spirit to be withdrawn from those who proved in the long-run to be unworthy of the leadership role given to them.

We are given little information as to how the spirit was communicated to the various individuals involved, although often it was effected without human mediation [cf Eldad and Medad (Num 11); 1 Sam 19; and the experience of most, if not all, of the judges]. In David's case the spirit endowment seems to have been simultaneous with the act of anointing. Apart from those whose spirit endowment was followed immediately by prophesying, it is hard to say whether those accessed by the spirit had any consciousness of what was taking place at the actual moment of endowment.

There is no indication throughout our texts that the spirit of Yahweh worked any kind of inner, moral transformation in the spirit-endowed. This is most clear in the life of Samson, but is also evident in the likes of Gideon, Jephthah and Saul.

At this stage the spirit is still restricted to a small group in (civil) leadership and in prophetic bands. But the hope is expressed (Num 11:29) that this possession might yet become universal (at least within Israel).

The evil spirit which appears for the first time in the Abimelech story becomes prominent in the experience of Samuel after David's anointing and endowment with the spirit of Yahweh. It is not to be identified with Yahweh's spirit but, nevertheless, is described in terms which indicate that it functions within Yahweh's sovereign control, even contributing to the outworking of Yahweh's purposes [much as the "wind" does in Numbers 11].

It is a less powerful and successful phenomenon than the spirit of Yahweh, not able to co-exist with Yahweh's spirit but wielding influence only where that spirit has departed. It is successful only ~~is~~ as much as it contributes to the outworking of Yahweh's purposes for his chosen servant and people.

It should be thought of as a similar type of phenomenon to Yahweh's spirit and not merely as a human disposition or attitude, or as a way of describing mental illness.

The reference to the evil spirit in Judges 9 - and all the more that in 1 Kings 22 - tends to suggest that we are to construe the evil spirit as an individual hypostasis independent of Yahweh, "a personal being" (so, Baumgartel, 364). This may have implications for the understanding of the spirit of Yahweh developed elsewhere in the Old Testament. But in the texts we have considered there is nothing to indicate that Yahweh's spirit is regarded as being such an individual hypostasis, although perhaps we should view it as being something more than that "manifestation in human experience of the life-giving, energy-creating power of God" which Snaith (1944:153), amongst others, describes. Johnson (1942:16) warns us against regarding the spirit as a mere impersonal force. He himself prefers to describe the spirit as "that indefinable extension of God's personality which enables him to exercise a mysterious influence on mankind".

The evil spirit can be regarded as the agent of God's judgement or even retributive justice (Judges 9) against the (internal) enemies of Israel [much as the "wind" functions in Num 11].

NOTES

Chapter One

/1/ There are fourteen references to rwḥ in Numbers: rwḥ in man (5:14,14,30; 14:24; 16:22; 27:16); rwḥ of God (11:17,25,25,26,29 - all in the present passage; 24:2; 27:18?); rwḥ = wind (11:31).

/2/ Here, we are anticipating our conclusion (pp 30f) that the spirit in this passage is Yahweh's and not, as Weisman (1981: 225ff) maintains, the personal spirit of Moses.

/3/ There are other references in the Pentateuch to the spirit of God in relation to individuals: Gen 41:38 (Joseph); Ex 31:3, 35:31 (Bezalel), 28:3; Num 24:2 (Balaam); probably Num 27:18 and Deut 34:9 (both Joshua); [and Gen 6:3?].

/4/ Cf 9:1. Also compare 7:1 and 9:15 (cf Ex 40:17) with 1:1.

/5/ Although additional information is provided about the Gershonites and Merarites (v 17).

/6/ Wenham (103) notes that such triads are a favourite device of Hebrew writers (further citing Num 16-17; 22-24).

/7/ Lexicographically: the recurrence of the roots 'sp, r^c, 'kl, and yrđ. Also, emphasis on Moses' leadership, prophecy, location at the tent of meeting, the camp, etc.

/8/ Compare Ex 14:10-14; 15:24-17:7; Num 14:2-3; 16:13-14; 20:2-13; 21:4-5; Deut 1:26f; Ps 78:17-42; 95:8-11. See further Tunyogi (386ff); and de Vries (52ff). In contrast, Jer 2:2; Hosea 2:17; etc portray the desert period as one of deep faithfulness of Israel to Yahweh.

/9/ Which leads Noth (1972:123, n 349) to suggest that here we may have "a substitution for something which originally gave a more explicit reason for the complaint". In every other case of murmuring, a specific deprivation or problem is indicated.

/10/ It has often been suspected that this section is not a simple literary unit - largely because of alleged doublets (see, e.g., Coats, 1982:97ff). Most such analysts posit a base narrative supplemented with "Aaron" material. However, the subject matter of the chapter is now so closely joined together that Noth (1968:92) thinks "it is impossible to pursue a division into separate literary sources".

/11/ Some (e.g., Coats, 1982:97) see the feminine singular (tdbr) as evidence of an original Miriam story (cf previous note). However, the use of a sg. where a pl. is in fact involved is far from unique, cf Budd (133); Noth (1968:93). The fem. sg. may be deliberate, emphasising Miriam's primary role. See v 10 where she alone is punished.

/12/ The two words for 'only' ('k and gm, v 2) emphasise the fact that the issue is uniqueness.

/13/ For Miriam as prophetess, see Ex 15:20. Aaron is described only as Moses' prophet (i.e. spokesman before Pharaoh, Ex 7:1). However, it is recorded on a number of occasions that Yahweh spoke to him (Ex 4:27; Lev 10:8; Num 18:1,8,20). This may be another reason why Miriam has priority over Aaron in this story. It may also be a further indication that Miriam was the instigator of the opposition.

/14/ Kselman (500ff), arguing against Noth (1968:95), etc who regard this as a later addition, supports Albright's view that vv 6-8 are a "piece of ancient poetry preserved by J". It is certainly not inappropriate in the context (so, Budd, 133). Similarly, Coats (1982:98) "in the received text this stage functions as a response to the rebellion". Cf 11:7-9.

/15/ 'spsp, a hap. leg, from the root 'sp 'to gather' (niph^{cal}, 'to return') which is frequent in Num 11-12 (cf Qal: 11:16, 24, 32; 12:14-15; and niph^{cal}: 11:30; 12:14-15. See note 7 above). It suggests 'gathered ones' and Jobling (1986a:55) thinks these are the foreigners gathered around Israel's boundary. He, et al, wants to identify them with the 'mixed multitude' of Ex 12:38. Although MT uses a different term, the LXX has epimiktos here, as in Ex 12:38, which would seem to suggest that it understood the two groups as being identical - a further link with Egypt!

/16/ Noth (1968:85) notes that the suffix of qrbw refers back to the h^cm of vv 1-2, evidence that from a literary point of view vv 1-3 and vv 4ff belong together.

/17/ In view of Ex 12:38, the cry for meat is strange (cf G.B. Gray, 103). Riggans (87) makes the tentative suggestion that these beasts are being kept for sacrificial purposes (cf v 22). Jobling (1986a:62) regards the request for meat as insincere, the rabble seeking occasion for rebellion.

/18/ See note 13 above for a similar suggestion that Miriam incited Aaron.

/19/ G.B. Gray (102) suggests Ex 15:23-25 and 17:2-7 as possibilities. Noth (1968:85) posits the Yahwistic manna story parts of which he believes were worked into the P narrative in Ex 16 by an editor. However, in none of these stories (or indeed any others prior to this point in the narrative) do we find bkh used in relation to the people of Israel.

/20/ Despite Coats (1988:120) who notes that "weeping can be equivalent to the 'cry' for help (Jdg 14:16-17)" and so not necessarily negative.

/21/ This is no doubt what Budd (131) has in mind when he claims that 'Egypt' in some measure functions as the anti-Christ of the OT.

/22/ For example, Coats (1968:97). We note the following similarities with Exodus 16: the people remember the various foods they had in Egypt; Yahweh responds with the gift of quail; this process is associated with the murmuring motif; dew is mentioned in connection with the manna. But there are also many differences: manna predominates in Ex 16, quail here; manna and quail simultaneous in origin in Ex 16, but separate here; the use of bkh here rather than lwn; in contrast to Ex 16 this chapter issues in judgement; here, in contrast to Ex 16, the manna is familiar food since they have had time to grow weary of it; no report of the miraculous provision of manna here (although see v 9); Ex 16 report of the appearance and gathering of the quail related. The descriptions of the manna are not identical.

/23/ So, Jobling (1986a:34) and contra Noth (1972:125, n 353), since the complaint does not appear to have been communicated directly to Yahweh, or even to Moses (cf also 11:4; 12:2).

/24/ The verb b^cr prepares us for the significance of the

aetiology in v 3.

/25/ Where the root 'kl is used to describe the fire. Other points of contact with Ex 24 are: the association of Moses with seventy elders plus two other named individuals; Joshua accompanying him; the description of the elders (v 11) as 'sylym ('chief men') a word occurring nowhere else in the Hebrew Bible but from the same root as 'I will take ('sl)' in Num 11:17, which leads G.B. Gray (116) to regard the two accounts as "variations from a common story".

/26/ Cf Is 4:4 where the cleansing of Jerusalem is effected by a 'spirit of burning' (brwh mšpt wbrwh b^cr).

/27/ Cf also v 18 ('consecrate'); and 12:15 where the march was delayed due to Miriam's need for purification [and, perhaps also, by implication, 11:33?].

/28/ Cf 6:9 where we find details of the cleansing of a Nazarite defiled by contact with a dead body.

/29/ Wenham (109) regards it as once more emphasising the interrelatedness of the popular demand for meat and Moses' prayer for spiritual support.

/30/ Compare Ex 10:13, 19 and the east wind which first brought and then removed the plague of locusts; Ex 14:21 [in response to the people's complaint]; and Ex 15:8, 10 for Yahweh's rwḥ as wind/ breath in salvation and judgement.

/31/ Because of the people's lack of concern about their food as punishment, Coats (1968:109) proposes an original reference in the realm of the positive motif alone (cf also Ex 16:13). In the present context, however, this lack of concern simply further underlines the people's rebellion against Yahweh.

/32/ Coats (1968:109) regards this as a 'new punishment' (contrast vv 18-24). The most common means for resolving this problem is to see here a reflection of two different forms of the tradition (if not two sources).

/33/ For other references to a delegation of seventy elders see Ex 24:1 and Ezek 8. The number 'seventy' here has been understood as simply a large number (so, Noth, 1968:89) or as having a symbolic meaning (so, Snaith, 1969:142) = the number of all the nations on earth (Gen 10).

/34/ Probably the heads of the families (cf Ex 12:21). According to the tradition there were already elders among the Israelites in Egypt (Ex 3:16ff) [and, in fact, nothing prevents us from assuming that the institution of elders in its origins was pre-Mosaic (so, Lindblom, 1962:100)]. Their task was to judge and to give decisions in disputed cases in general (cf Deut 21:2; 22:15; etc); and possibly to provide leadership in war (so, G.B. Gray, 101).

/35/ See Ex 5:6,10,etc of Israelite foremen, "camp overseers" (so, Riggans, 93). In later passages they carry orders to the people (cf Jos 1:10; 3:2; Deut 20:5, 8f). In keeping with the basic meaning of the word, Budd (128) thinks the str was originally a scribe (cf LXX here), who developed into a subordinate official possibly with some distinct administrative function.

/36/ See Childs (1974:258-260) for a discussion of the relation between the two patterns he identifies in the murmuring traditions, the positive motif being prior [For a similar view see Wilson (1980:153)]. Childs (260) regards the arrangement of the material of the murmuring tradition as having been influenced by the position of the golden calf incident (260), "According to the redactor of J,

Israel's rebellion and disobedience increased and intensified following the disaster with the calf".

/37/ Part of the problem is in determining the relationship of the seventy to the "judges" in Ex 18 (and Deut 1:9-17). Despite appearance of similarities, there are many differences between the two accounts: here these auxiliary leaders arose under divine initiative and not in accordance with the proposal of a mere man; the seventy were chosen from the elders, who are not mentioned in Ex 18; neither spirit nor prophesying are mentioned in Ex 18; no indication here that their task is to be one of judging. See further, for example, Reviv (1982:566ff); Weisman (1977:399ff); Hyatt (192-4); and Childs (1974:324-6) for a discussion on the beginnings of the judicial system.

/38/ For example, Noth (1968:87) who describes it as "the divine gift to Moses to enable him to fulfil his duties."

/39/ However, there are a number of differences: the spirit is "upon" Moses, but "of Elijah" (construct case); there is no mention of the participation of Yahweh in the Elijah passage, while here not only is he the initiator of activity with respect to the seventy, his spirit is actually mentioned in v 29; there would appear to be a contrast in the Elijah passage (2 Kings 2) between the "spirit of Elijah" v 15 and the "spirit of Yahweh" v 16.

/40/ Sawyer (8) thinks that the verb here 'looks like an isolated relic of semi-technical language'.

/41/ T takes the verb as a denominative from 'syl which may suggest a link with Ex 24:11. Cf note /25/.

/42/ This would suggest a measure of parallel between Moses and Elijah although that need not be construed in Weisman's terms (cf above p 31 and note /39/). Weisman (1981:228) regards both men as "charismatic archetypes" in which the spirit attributed to them provides the source of inspiration to others.

/43/ Note the prominent place given to prophets and prophesying in this whole passage (cf note /7/): the description of Moses (11:24) as mediator/ bearer of the divine word(s); here in vv 25-27 the root nb' occurs 3 times in the hithpa^cāl verbal form (the only occurrences of the verb in any tense in the Pentateuch), and in the nominal form in v 29 and 12:6 (otherwise in the Pentateuch only at Gen 20:7; Ex 7:1; Deut 13:1,3,5; 18:15,18,20,22; 34:10 [Ex 15:20 Miriam = nby'h]). See also note /45/ below.

/44/ In MT, 10:35-36 are braced with inverted nuns. Medieval Jewish tradition suggests that these two verses were not from Moses but from an otherwise suppressed book by Eldad and Medad. This view is explained and critiqued by Leiman (348ff). His own view is that the two verses did not come from an independent book but that the nuns suggest that they form an independent book.

/45/ Compare Gen 20:7 which suggests to Wilson (1978:12) that "within the groups bearing the Elohist tradition prophets' activities included intercession".

/46/ See also Num 24:4 where "Balaam fell into an ecstatic trance as he saw the vision" (so, Wenham, 176f). Similarly, Keil (186). In that context, the spirit is described as being "of God" rather than "of Yahweh", possibly because Balaam was a non-Israelite.

/47/ For a survey of the discussion see Rendtorff (797-9), and more recently Wilson (1979:329ff) and Parker (276ff).

/48/ He does, however, caution that it is a complex issue

in which generalisations are to be avoided.

/49/ For similar views see also Buber (1946:148), Snaith (1967: 232), Parker (276), et al.

/50/ The seventy elders were chosen before the descent of the spirit and their prophesying, not after.

/51/ Although his suggestion that both meanings apply ("the elders prophesy unceasingly but they do not speak a genuine word of prophecy") is scarcely tenable. *why?*

/52/ Lindblom (1962:102) thinks that nothing forbids the supposition that Yahweh had his prophets among the Israelite nomads in the desert as well as among the settled population in Canaan.

/53/ The names are assessed differently by various commentators, being considered fictitious (Noth, 1968:90), genuine (Snaith, 1969:143), or symbolic (Lindblom, 1962:101).

/54/ Compare Ex 24:1ff where two named individuals, Nadab and Abihu, are included in addition (it would appear) to the seventy elders. See note /25/.

/55/ The only other reference in Exodus-Numbers to names being 'written (root, ktb)' is in Num 17:2 where 12 names were written on rods, that 'for the head of each father's house'. If this has any bearing whatsoever on our present text it would perhaps suggest the officially recognised authority of those named individuals.

/56/ In view of the association of dew and manna with the camp in v 9, the emphasis here on "in the camp" may underline the fact that the gift of the spirit is intended here as a positive blessing. Contrast the quail which fell outside the camp (v 31); and Miriam's expulsion from the camp for purification. The camp is the place of blessing; outside the camp is the place of judgement and of death.

/57/ An interpretation at least as old as Calvin (35).

/58/ In the case of Eldad and Medad the gift of the spirit was clearly independent of any laying on of hands as, for example, Binns suggested in the case of the seventy (see p 33).

/59/ In Num 27:18 Joshua is mentioned as having the spirit 'in him (bw)'. This may possibly refer back to this section, implying that Joshua was one of the seventy. However, it is not clear if it is the 'spirit of Yahweh' that is meant in 27:18. Moreover, there the spirit is said to be 'in him', while here C1 is used.

/60/ Sawyer (9) seems to imply that Joshua attempted to restrain all the prophesying elders, a reflection of "the opposition that must have existed both between rival groups of prophets (cf 1 Kings 9:22; Jer 23) and between prophets and the rest of the community."

/61/ This is perhaps underlined further when we consider the closeness of the connection of Joshua with the tent in early tradition (cf Ex 33). See also 12:4-8 regarding prophecy at the tent.

/62/ Wilson (1979:327): "outside of the context of the ritual, this possession behaviour is viewed negatively and may even be suppressed".

/63/ See Ex 32:17 and the part played by Joshua alongside Moses and against the people in the golden calf incident.

/64/ A number of scholars, e.g., Noth (1968:90), regard these words as the expression of a general high esteem for prophecy from a later date put into the mouth of Moses.

/65/ Other occurrences of the word 'prophet' in the

Pentateuch are: Gen 20:7 (Abraham); Ex 7:7 (Aaron); Num 12:6; Deut 13: 1,3,5; 18: 5,18,20, 20, 22, 22 (the Prophet); 34:10; prophetess Ex 15:20 (Miriam).

/66/ The thought of v 29 is somewhat akin to that of Jer 31:33ff; Ezek 36:27; Joel 2:28ff, although as G.B. Gray (116) points out the present text is nowhere so advanced as these, there being here no "idea of that deep spiritual communion of man with God of which Jeremiah is thinking when he speaks of 'the law in the inward parts' and 'the knowledge of God'; nor even of that direct speech of Yahweh which was granted to Moses (Ex 33:11) but simply of ... prophetic frenzy ..."

/67/ The substantive is, however, used in 12:6. This could mean that the substantive was introduced here in v 29 to provide an even stronger link with the material in ch 12. It may on the other hand have pre-dated the editing of these three sections and ch 12 have been chosen as a sequel to this section partly because of the verbal link (as well as that of content). See on v 25 (pp 34ff above) as to whether we should understand "prophesying" in this section in terms of the experience of the prophet related in ch 12.

Chapter Two

/1/ The word rw appears only twice in Deuteronomy (in 2:30 of the human spirit; and in 34:9 possibly of the divine spirit). In Joshua it appears twice (2:11; 5:1) in the sense of human courage.

/2/ The book is usually divided into three parts: 1:1-3:6 Introduction; 3:7-16:31 Narratives of the Judges; and 17-21 Appendices or Epilogue (so, J. Gray, vi), though some commentators, like Mayes (1985:13) and Soggin (37ff), include 2:6-3:6 in the middle section of the book, as an introduction to that part.

/3/

Name	Tribe	Deliver(ed)	Judge(d)	Spirit
Othniel	Judah	3:9	3:10	3:10
Ehud	Benjamin	-	-	-
Shamgar	-	3:31	-	-
Deborah/	Ephraim	-	4:4	-
Barak	Naphtali	-	-	-
Gideon	Manasseh	8:22 etc	-	6:34
(Abimelech)	-----	-----	-----	(9:23)
Tola	Issachar	10:1	10:2	-
Jair	(Gilead)	-	10:3	-
Jephthah	(Gilead)	-	12:7	11:29
Ibzan	(Bethlehem)	-	12:8,9	-
Elon	Zebulun	-	12:11(x2)	-
Abdon	Ephraim	-	12:13,14	-
Samson	Dan	13:5	15:20;16:31	13:25;14:6,19; and 15:14.

/4/ The historical Period of the Judges continues into 1 Samuel where both Eli and Samuel are said to have "judged" Israel (1 Sam 4:18; 7:15ff).

/5/ Abimelech functions more as an anti-judge (see p 72). Ehud, Shamgar and Gideon are to be regarded as judges, at least from the point of view of the narrator (cf on 2:16-18).

/6/ Soggin (4), however, thinks Shamgar has "nothing to do with the judges" and has been inserted into the text "for

reasons we can no longer establish"; while Grosheide (211) regards him as a major judge.

/7/ Their main function was to proclaim each year to the assembled people the law that had been received from Norway. They were also able to make decisions in certain legal cases.

/8/ He argues that these 'judges' were only secondarily combined with the charismatic heroes.

/9/ For example, Thomson (75ff), taking Deborah and Gideon as his points of departure, concludes that the judge was the source of decisions - regarding both military and civilian questions - which came from God and which were of interest to the whole or part of the amphictyony. See, also, summary in de Vaux (1978:752ff).

/10/ For example, Orlinsky (375-87); and Hauser (191, n.9.)

/11/ Semantically it has been shown clearly that the root špt and its derivatives can have two basic meanings, (a) 'to exercise the function of judge' (in the context of a court or a private judgement). This is the most frequent meaning of the word in the Hebrew Bible; and (b) 'to exercise some form of government', political or sociological depending on the context/ "to rule". From this data it is concluded that both a military role and a judicial function are possible connotations (and hence functions) of the judge. This allows both the major judges who conduct no judicial proceedings (except Deborah (4:4)) and the minor judges who lead no military campaigns (except, perhaps, Tola) to be designated by the same title. Cf Soggin (2) and de Vaux (1978:767).

/12/ Auld (259) notes that chapter 1 is now widely recognised as dependent on and so later than, the Book of Joshua, "even if its picture of less thorough success seems more plausible and even closer to the facts".

/13/ Indeed what we find is a double progression spanning vv 22-34 (see Webb's diagram, 99): 22-26: Israelites defeat Canaanites -> 27-33 Israelites do not dispossess Canaanites -> 34 Canaanites press back (lḥṣ) Israelites (the introduction of the verb lḥṣ is ominous and turns out to be a foretaste of things to come (cf 2:18; 4:3; 6:9; 10:12) but 22-26 Some Canaanites are allowed to survive and flourish at a distance -> 27-33 Canaanites live amongst Israelites -> Israelites live amongst Canaanites - the inhabitants of the land -> 34 Israelites are allowed to live at a distance.

/14/ Notice, also, how the strategic and military disobedience of chapter 1 -> co-existence with the enemy -> apostasy -> punishment in military or strategic terms.

/15/ Cf Mullen (191, n.19) who notes that in contrast to what is understood as the common covenantal theology of the deuteronomic writer "deliverance, in the book of Judges, remains the decision and act of Yahweh's mercy and is not the result of any fulfilment of the requirements of the laws of Deuteronomy or of any penitent act by Israel". Similarly Polzin (1980:159-60).

/16/ Intermarriage (v 6a) is entirely understandable as a middle term, or as an aspect of the 'living among the Canaanites' of v 5. But its specific mention here is unexpected since there has been no reference to intermarriage as such in 1:1-3:6. What has been featured however is the marriage of Othniel. The mention therefore at this point of intermarriage with Canaanites sharpens up

the background against which we are to view Othniel. See also Gideon's relationship with a concubine -> Abimelech (8:31); Jephthah, the son of a harlot (11:1); and Samson's renown in this field!

/17/ The following elements are found in the pattern:

- (a) evil doing/ sin/ idolatry/ apostasy of Israel
- (b) divine anger/ judgement/ punishment: protection withdrawn/ delivered to the enemy -> oppression;
- (c) cry of distress (or repentance) to the Lord;
- (d) judge-deliverer raised by Yahweh (and accession of the spirit);
- (e) oppressor subdued and Israel delivered (reverses (b));
- (f) the land rests;
- (g) the death of the judge (after which the process repeats itself).

Mayes (1985: 18) regards (a) - (f); and Jobling (1986b:47) (c) - (f) as constituting the 'judge-cycle' proper. Jobling views (a) - (b) as the 'gap' between cycles.

/18/ The pattern does not proceed entirely mechanically and predictably. Non-standard variations occur in each of the cycles. See, for example, Mayes' further comments (1985:18); and Lilley (98). We might note also some further significant features (so, e.g., Anderson, 49): (a) a chronological scheme which is part of a larger system linking the Exodus with the founding of the Temple (1 Kings 6:1); and (b) the view that the crises and deliverances affected all Israel and that the judges exercised authority over the entire country; whereas, if the stories are read separately from the framework, the impression given is that each refers to a particular area of the country and to a particular tribe or group of tribes, from which it follows that the leaders mentioned had local rather than national authority. The Dtr has in this way emphasised the characteristically Deuteronomistic ideal of the unity of all Israel. But if the crises were regional and if the judges exercised only a local authority, then the episodes may have overlapped in time; and the period of the judges may well have been considerably shorter than might be supposed from the figures given throughout the book.

/19/ The same phrase also introduces the career of Gideon at 6:1, and in a slightly modified form " .. continued to do/ did again .." at 3:12; 4:1; 10:6 and 13:1. See Webb (123-125) for the effect this phrase has on the structure of the whole main body of the book, dividing it into 6 major narrative episodes.

/20/ Webb (244, n. 8) notes that on his reckoning 9c is positioned centrally in the unit.

/21/ De Vaux (1978:806) thinks the reference to "judging" (as well as to Othniel's death in 11b) is part of the minor judges' formula (cf 10:1-5; 12:7-15), the Deuteronomist's aim being to head the list of judges with a typical example of both these categories in combination, that of a saviour who is at the same time a judge. However, there is also a reference to "judging" in the narratives of Deborah (4:4), Jephthah (12:7) and Samson (15:20 and 16:31). Again, no mention is made here as to the length of the judgeship (contrast the minor judges 10:1-5 and 12:7-15). Moreover the deaths of Ehud (4:1), Gideon (8:32), Jephthah (12:7) and Samson (16:30-31) are recorded. Perhaps we should think instead of the minor judges' formula as (befitting the literary purpose) omitting elements of the larger major

judge form.

/22/ But it does not necessarily imply that Othniel lived for the whole period of peace (so, Webb, 243-4, n. 7).

/23/ 'Aram naharaim has traditionally been translated 'Aram of the two rivers', i.e. Mesopotamia (cf Soggin, 46), although here until recently 'rm was usually corrected to 'dm. But the correction evidently introduced a lectio facilior. Webb (243, n 5) notes that the oppressor has been variously identified as a Babylonian Cassite, a Nubian, an Edomite, an Asiatic usurper in Egypt, a Midianite, a chieftain of a tribe related to the Midianites who had migrated north and settled in Syria and a surviving chieftain of the southern (Judean) hills.

/24/ This would seem to imply, as de Vaux points out (1978: 807) from a tradition-critical perspective, that this Othniel did not belong to the period of the Judges but to that of the settlement of the tribes. See, however, notes /21/ and /23/.

/25/ Othniel is of the tribe of Judah. There seems to be a kind of geographical movement from south to north with respect to the judges, following on a similar order in chapter 1. Dan, in the south, though coming last, was later to transfer to the north.

/26/ It may be worthwhile investigating what connections if any there may be in this respect with the later teaching of the prophets and the role of the spirit in the return of Israel to the land after the exile.

/27/ Ehud's call is glossed over while Barak's comes as a word from Yahweh through Deborah.

/28/ This phrase may indicate his natural potential for leadership. Webb (150) thinks the gbwr hyl does not necessarily mark Gideon out as a professional soldier but is certain that he is not either a man devoid of means (notice the mention of ten servants in v 27). Boling (131) translates, "aristocrat".

/29/ Webb (150), however, suggests that Gideon's self-deprecatory words in v 15 are not to be taken at face value, particularly in view of his considerable competence in military strategy (cf 6:34-35; 7:23-25). One might add to this his mastery of diplomacy in settling internal disputes (8:1-3). It is however arguable that these, especially 6:34-35, should be regarded as the effects of the spirit upon him; all the more so in that we have no indication whatsoever in the preceding narrative of any military ability as we have, for example, in the cases of Othniel and Jephthah.

/30/ Quoted in L.R. Klein (215, n. 9). Several of the other judges can be seen in this light: the left-handed Ehud; the non-Israelite(?) Shamgar; the woman Deborah; and, Jephthah, the son of the harlot.

/31/ Mayes (1985:24) is one of many commentators who think there are "strong indications" which suggest that the identification of Jerubbaal with Gideon is secondary.

/32/ It appears elsewhere in 1 Chronicles 12:18; 2 Chronicles 24:20 of the prophetic spirit. Auld (256) finds in this an argument for the lateness of the narrative. However, his argument could as easily work in the opposite direction if the Chronicler's use is dependent on the Deuteronomist's.

/33/ Soggin (131) supposes that here we are confronted with something like the third calling of Gideon and that the

possession by the spirit obviously does not presuppose either the calling (vv 11-24) or the fight against the Canaanite cult (vv 25-32). However, reading the narrative synchronically it can be argued that the promise of the divine presence, the reference to the 'mighty man of valour', and the mention of 'this your might' (all vv 12-15) may be regarded as anticipating the coming of the spirit as the means of equipping and preparing Gideon for battle. This view is further corroborated when we remember that, in the Othniel episode, the coming of the spirit upon Othniel took the place of the presence of Yahweh with the judge, in the introduction (2:18).

/34/ Mullen (199, n 35) thinks Gideon puts God to the test - a violation of Deut 6:16. But Soggin (133), noting that in the biblical world dew was considered to be a gift from heaven, a miracle of divine grace, suggests that Gideon is asking for a sign from heaven - not in fact a sign of doubt, unsure faith or impiety. Interestingly, in this pericope no mention is made of Yahweh, the deity is referred to only as 'lhym (vv 36, 39, 40), which might suggest that we are to regard this incident as belying Gideon's faith.

/35/ The sounding of the trumpets cannot in fact be understood as a secular act seeing that, here, we have the ram's horn (špwr) (cf also 3:27; 6:34), which is still sounded in acts of solemn worship even today.

/36/ We see it: in the way victory was won despite, indeed, we might say, because of, and through Ehud's handicap; in Shamgar's single-handed heroics with only an oxgoad as a weapon; in Barak's victory following Yahweh's miraculous intervention by means of a thunderstorm (5:20-21); and in Sisera's humiliation at the hands of a (non-Israelite) woman with only a tent peg as a weapon.

/37/ It is interesting to note that the name "Yahweh" appears in decreasing frequency as the narrative proceeds: 27x in ch 6; 8x in ch 7; and only 4x in ch 8.

/38/ Many have recognised ironic elements throughout the Book of Judges, perhaps none more so than L.R. Klein who attempts (7) "to set forth the ironic and literary structure of the book and to show how they function in the text". Klein submits (20) that the book of Judges "may be perceived as a tour de force of irony, touching on every level from non-ironic to multi-layered irony, and that this ironic development is progressive".

/39/ The expected pattern is resumed at 10:6, introducing the account of the next major judge Jephthah.

/40/ Malamet's table (1976:163):

- (a) rise not preceded by foreign subjugation
- (b)/ (c) no divine inspiration/ revelations. His military efforts aimed at oppression.
- (d) not spontaneous rise but by political manoeuvring.
Based on inheritance.
- (e) aided by paternal pedigree and familial ties on maternal side
- (f) ruler in a key urban centre. Shechem a long-sanctified site
- (g) authority that of kingship.

/41/ The name 'Abimelech' declares the kingship of the theos patros or the divine sonship of the person who bears it (so, Soggin, 167). L.R. Klein (71) quotes Boling's suggestion that father = Yahweh and comments "what may have

been intended to honour Yahweh has become anti-Yahwist." See also pp 75ff above.

/42/ A related theme to that of the monarchy is that of heredity which first appears as a theme in the Gideon-cycle where the possibility is raised that a son of Gideon may succeed him (8:22), a possibility which then dominates the text through chapter 9. In the cases of Eli and Samuel, the continuance of the judge's office (even in his lifetime) by his sons is envisaged - all these sons are faithless and unworthy (1 Sam 2:12-17, 22-28, etc 8:1-3,5). In the framework of the judge-cycles, any tendency towards hereditary leadership has negative results; every son of a judge who achieves a leadership role (Abimelech; Hophni and Phinehas; Joel and Abijah) exercises it badly (so, Jobling, 1986b:53).

/43/ Abimelech is only said to have "ruled" Israel (v 22). He was mlk only of the city state of Shechem (v 6).

/44/ The possibilities include the system of minor judges; families (especially of judges); oligarchy (9:2). Cf Jobling (1986b:60).

/45/ It is with the account of Jephthah that Webb begins his literary analysis. He notes (221, n 1) that Jephthah has been of central interest to scholars interested in either the sources of the book or of the office of judge or of both.

/46/ Soggin (203) thinks Richter is certainly right when he indicates that these elaborations are obviously meant to deepen the content of the 'frameworks' and take it to its extreme consequences. So (he thinks) rather than a Dtr framework we have a real introduction to the rest of the book: in fact the characteristics of the Dtr 'framework' end with this judge; we have a similar formula only in 13:1 where it is reduced to the minimum possible extent. But this is not necessarily the case. We have seen similar additions or elaborations of different elements in the framework in the earlier narratives, especially in that concerning Gideon.

/47/ Mullen (198) notes the element of presumption in the cry of v 15.

/48/ Boling (199) regards the offer of this second title 'head' as another clear indication that the office of judge involved both administrative and military responsibilities. Similarly, J. Gray (333) who thinks Jephthah was "appointed to a regular office rather than the call to an act of deliverance and probably reflects such official status".

/49/ See note /30/.

/50/ However, in v 54 it would appear that Jephthah does not understand belief in the one God, the basic tenet in Yahweh's commandments (cf Deut 6:4).

/51/ This as we have noted already is the only occurrence of the substantive "judge" outside the introduction. Significantly it is applied to Yahweh.

/52/ A -> B -> C where A = spirit coming; B = preparations for battle; C = Yahweh gave victory. A similar sequence underlies the intervening narratives concerning Ehud, Barak and Gideon although Yahweh's spirit is not mentioned in every case. The action of Yahweh in A establishes divine sanction for events B and C which follow and predict their successful outcome.

/53/ Webb (230, n 75) thinks that though Yahweh uses Jephthah to deliver Israel he never really approves of him.

"His silence is the other side of His anger!" He contrasts his explicit involvement from the beginning in the careers of Othniel, Ehud, Barak and especially Gideon.

/54/ This may explain the reversion to "came upon" - a mild word compared with other verbs used of the 'spirit of Yahweh' especially in the cases of Gideon and Samson. We might compare Numbers 11 and the verbal preparation of the seventy for the coming of the spirit upon them. Gideon was promised God's presence prior to the coming of the spirit. In Samson's case, a long series of promises was given to his parents.

/55/ Civil war is a theme of the DtrH: Saul/ David; David/ Abimelech; Israel/ Judah.

/56/ Martin (151ff) separates the Samson narratives from those of the rest of the judges.

/57/ Wharton (57) thinks that "nothing in chapters 14 and 15 requires us to take into account Samson's Nazarite status or his long hair. He regards 13:5, 7b as additions which complicate and confuse the narrative. On the other hand, Blenkinsopp (65) regards the Samson story as it is as a structured narrative with a plot and principle of unity "this plot revolves around an explicitly religious theme, that of the broken vow".

/58/ L.R. Klein (116) believes that Samson uniquely symbolises Israel. "Israel, Yahweh's people, is symbolically re-born in a single human form in this narrative. Yahweh's high expectation for Israel and her subsequent shortcomings are dramatically embodied in the figure of Samson. The irony is telling."

/59/ Crenshaw (1979:40) notes that "ironically it became the scene of his final resting place".

/60/ Against Koehler (113) who thinks 13:25 is a reference not to the coming of possession of the spirit but of the existence of such possession.

/61/ So also Crenshaw (1974:479) who regards v 4 as redactional, "the redactor wishes to point out that God uses men to accomplish his purposes even when they are oblivious to that fact". Also, Polzin (1980:181), "Samson is par excellence the unknowing judge".

/62/ Particularly in chapter 16 there are a number of incidents where Samson performs extraordinary feats of strength without any reference to his being aided by the spirit. Indeed, he himself attributes his strength to his, long Nazarite hair (16:17).

/63/ Crenshaw (1974:490) regards the original meaning of the riddle as a veiled allusion to the sexual act.

/64/ Consequently, Exum (1983:40) notes that "Yahweh's departure from Samson is not, as we might fear, final ... it reminds us of Yahweh's freedom to alter the course of events and willingness to respond to human need".

/65/ This against Mayes (1985:11), et al, who think that the DtrH presents Israel as having no future - although Mayes does go on later to admit (13) "a hint of a promise of a better future is present". Crenshaw (1974:501) notes the parallel with the hint of hope at the ending of the DtrH complex in 2 Kings 25:27-30. [See also Gordon (1984:17) on the purpose of the Dtr History and the element of hope].

Chapter Three

/1/ The only other occurrences of rw in 1 Samuel are in 1:15 and 30:12 with reference to the human spirit. In 2 Samuel, the word is found only three times: in 22:11 in the sense of "wind"; in 22:16 to denominate the "breath" of God; and in 23:2 as the source of David's prophetic inspiration.

/2/ However, the elements of the recurring framework formula familiar from the Judges' narratives are not present here.

/3/ E.g., Hertzberg (29); Mauchline (50); and McCarter (1980a:75f).

/4/ E.g., McCarter (1980a:76) notes that it is "fitting enough on Hannah's lips" and "sounds a clear keynote" for the subsequent context.

/5/ Gordon (1984:24) thinks the contrasting fortunes of the Elides and Samuel adumbrates in measure the story of Saul and David which also portrays advancement under divine auspices and demoralisation without them.

/6/ So, e.g., Childs (1979:273) who, building on the work of Carlson ["David, the Chosen King. A Traditio-Historical Approach to the Second Book of Samuel", Stockholm, 1964] describes the canonical function of Hannah's Song in these terms: "the focus on God's chosen king, his anointed one, David, appears right at the outset, and reveals the stance from which the whole narrative is being viewed". Cf also Gordon (1984:26).

/7/ This ark has given its name to the "Ark Narrative", a conjectured pre-canonical, originally independent, composition celebrating the awesome exploits of the ark prior to its deposition in Jerusalem. Chapters 4:1b-7:1 form the core of this alleged "Ark Narrative" (see, e.g., R.W. Klein, 38-40). The obvious connections between chapter 4 and what precedes, however, make it unlikely that 4:1b represents the start of the original "Ark Narrative".

/8/ H.J. Stoebe "Das erste Buch Samuelis", Gutersloh: Gerd Mohn, 1973. Quoted in Eslinger (1985:168).

/9/ Gordon (1986:98) suggests that Dagon "may have been head of the Philistine pantheon".

/10/ As he had done earlier through Samson (cf Judges 16:23ff) - only this time without human instrument.

/11/ Several of the framework elements with which we are familiar from the Judges' narratives are present here. See Jobling's detailed list (1986b:50).

/12/ Jobling (1986b:61) reminds us that "the sons of judges are consistently faithless". See also note /42/ on chapter two.

/13/ See any of the standard commentaries or introductions.

/14/ More recently Ishida (1977:30) - observing that immediate opposition to such an innovation as the monarchy was only to be expected - has suggested that the anti-monarchical sentiments in chapters 8, 10, and 12 belong to an early rather than a late stage in the tradition.

/15/ For detailed discussion and a review of the relevant scholarship see, for example, McCarter (1980a:12-14); Childs (1979:263-277); Eslinger (1985:11-42); R.W. Klein (xxviii-xxx); Gordon (1984:40-50); Birch (1976:1-10); Mayes (1978:1-10); etc.

/16/ E.g., Weiser, Samuel: seine geschichtliche Aufgabe und religiöse Bedeutung. Traditions-geschichtliche

Untersuchungen zu 1 Samuel 7-12", FRLANT 81, Gottingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1962 [quoted in Eslinger (1985: 25)] who notes that ch 7 reveals no anti-monarchic tendencies; ch 8 rejects only the non-Israelite monarchic model proposed by the people and not kingship per se; 10:17-27a portrays the choice of Saul as the will of God; etc. Also Boecker, Die Beurteilung der Anfänge des Konigtums in den deuteronomistischen Abschnitten des I. Samuelbuches", WMANT 31, Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener, 1969 [quoted in Gordon, 1986:28] who argued that the anti-monarchical passages are not so absolutely opposed to monarchy but do repudiate forms of kingship which would encroach upon the established sovereignty of Yahweh over his people.

/17/ The folkloristic story of the asses is usually regarded as the earliest part of the narrative into which has been inserted an account of Samuel's anointing of Saul as nagid; then probably the incident about the ecstatic prophets was added; and, finally, the modified whole incorporated into the Deuteronomistic History.

/18/ This remains true whether or not (as, e.g., McCarter, 1980a:62, 65-66 maintains) a Nazirite birth narrative belonging to Saul and initially present at this point in the narrative was later rewritten and applied to Samuel in chapter 1. /i

/19/ Eslinger (1985:285), however, though acknowledging that it is the normal function of a linear genealogy to provide legitimation, sees no such potential in Saul's genealogy. He suggests that it points to Saul's being "a nobody who will become a somebody as a result of Yahweh's decision to make use of him".

/20/ This status need not be denied by his words of self deprecation (v 21) which constitute a traditional part of the call form (see on v 16ff; also Jdg 6:15 re Gideon).

/21/ See, e.g., Joseph (Gen 39:6), David (1 Sam 16:12, 18), Esther (Est 2:7), the infant Moses (Ex 2:2); etc.

/22/ We might contrast Abimelech and, perhaps, Jephthah.

/23/ At this stage the talk is of a 'man of God', later of a seer (vv 9,11), and Samuel is not named until v 14. Principally for this reason it is often assumed that Samuel did not figure in the original version of the story and that Saul's interview was with a minor village seer. See, however, Gordon's alternative suggestion above (p 114).

/24/ This might also suggest the unity of the section.

/25/ Although the reader will only appreciate the full effect of this irony after he has been told that Saul has been anointed nagid (v 16).

/26/ Birch (1971:60) regards v 14 as the climax of the account. Mayes (1978:13), followed by R.W. Klein (88), regards this "late identification" of Samuel as part of the supplementing process through which the original folkloristic story went.

/27/ Gunn (1980:62) notes certain ironic parallels - through the motif of urgency/ delay - between this sacrifice and the first scene of rejection in chapter 13.

/28/ The history and meaning of anointing has been greatly elucidated by the studies of Kutsch ("Salbung als Rechtsakt", BZAW 87, 1963, Berlin: Topelmann) and Mettinger, who have detected two types of anointing in Israel: (1) anointing by the people, cf 2 Sam 2 and 5; and (2) anointing by Yahweh, often via a prophet, as here in

9:16 and 10:1; cf 1 Sam 16:13; 2 Kgs 9:3,6. Kutsch (52ff) relates these to two different models of anointing which seem to have existed in the ancient Near-East. He finds a parallel for the first in the practice of the Hittites; and for the second in Egyptian customs, where officials and vassals were anointed by the Pharaoh [quoted in R.W. Klein (85) and Weisman (1976:383)]. Weisman (1976:385) has questioned this differentiation and, instead, on the analogy of the two-stage marriage customary in the ANE, regards the two kinds of anointing as complementary steps in king-making.

On the basis of a study of the use of oil in the ANE, Mettinger (230; cf 222) proposed that anointing had a contractual, or covenantal meaning in Israel as in other nations. The anointing by the people then implies a contract between king and people (2 Sam 5:3), while the anointing by Yahweh signals a contractual relationship between Yahweh and the king in which Yahweh pledges himself to the king and becomes obligated to him as protector while the king in turn is consecrated to Yahweh and becomes his vassal. In this way the anointing becomes a visible sign of divine election (207) and accomplishes the king's political legitimation.

/29/ Saul's anointing is regarded by many, including Kutsch (58) and Mettinger (197), as being unhistorical. Gordon (1986:114), however, points to the repeated references in the HDR to Saul's status as 'Yahweh's anointed' as belying this (1 Sam 24:6,10; 26:9,1,16,23). Regardless of historicity the fact remains that in the present narrative Saul's anointing is performed by Samuel. ✓

/30/ See also the comments on the frequent use of the root ngd on v 6 (p 114).

/31/ For a discussion of the provenance, meaning and use of the term 'nagid' see, e.g., Mettinger (151-184); Ishida (1977:50f); and McCarter (1980a:178-9). Mettinger's suggested translation 'crown prince' (183) requires that the term was not used in royal contexts until some time later.

/32/ After a study of the calls of Moses, Gideon and a number of the classical prophets, Norman Habel (297-323) concluded that a formal literary structure characterises call narratives. Birch (1971:61; 1976:35-42) finds here a modified version of that form [for objections to his analysis, see Walters, (1978:69f)].

<u>Habel</u>	<u>Birch</u>
1) Divine confrontation	1) 9:15
2) Introductory Word	2) 9:16-17
3) Commission	4) 10:1;cf 9:20b
4) Objection	3) 9:21
5) Reassurance	6) 10:7b
6) Sign	5) 10:1b, 5-7a

Birch attributes the modifications in the order to the call being attached to a previously existing story of the search for the asses, and to the fact that Samuel serves as the human mediator of the call.

Richter (Die sogenannten vorprophetischen Berufungsberichte. FRLANT 101. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1970 - quoted in R.W. Klein, 84) gives a somewhat different analysis of the parallels between Saul, Moses, Gideon (and Jeremiah):

	<u>Saul</u>	<u>Moses</u>	<u>Gideon</u>
- I have seen the affliction	9:16;	Ex 3:7	
- their cry has come to me	9:16;	Ex 3:9	
- the sending (but see note)	9:16;	Ex 3:10,15	Jdg 6:14-15
- the anointing as prince	9:16;		
	& 10:1;		
- the saviour formula	9:16		Jdg 6:14-15
- the objection (<u>Jer</u> 1:6,7)	9:21	Ex 3:11;4:1,10	6:15
- support formula (<u>Jer</u> 1:8)	10:7b	Ex 3:12;4:12	6:16
- giving of the spirit	10:6		6:34

(note: the sending does not really denote the mission of Saul, but only his coming to Samuel).

/33/ The suggestion here of a Philistine threat seems to contradict 7:11-14. This, as R.W. Klein (89) has averred, may very well simply be a reflection of the variety of traditions preserved in 1 Sam 7-12 [We might also note the further tradition in chap 11 where Saul's great deliverance from the Ammonites is described]. It has led Buber (1956: 114-20) [quoted in Eslinger, 1985:306] to label 7:9, 11-14 as a gloss. Gordon (1986:108), however, regards the scene depicted in 7:11-14 as a "somewhat idealised picture ... manifestly intended to demonstrate the sufficiency of the old theocratic order".

/34/ Stoebe (1973:197,205) quoted in Eslinger (1985: 467, n 1).

/35/ Several scholars detect the hand of Dtr in the use of "sign" (v 1) for "signs" (vv 7,9): "For Dtr the sign is apparently all the events of vv 2-9 though, in fact, the older tradition refers to three signs" (so, R.W. Klein, 90-91). Birch (1971:65), somewhat unusually, thinks the "signs" of v 7 refer only to the various constituent parts of vv 5-6.

/36/ In the Gideon narrative, which as we have seen is in measure parallel to this one [note /32/ above], Gideon requests a 'sign' for his own reassurance (Jdg 6:17).

/37/ The presence of vv 11-13 also provides a reasonable explanation as to why the fulfilment of only the third sign - a cause of consternation to many scholars - is recorded for us in detail. "The narrator is not simply relating the fulfilment of the third sign" (so, Eslinger, 1985:329; emphasis mine). V 10 is intended as a prelude to vv 11-13. [This proverb appears again with a somewhat different aetiological explanation in 19:18ff.]

/38/ The question is obscure and the commentaries are filled with speculation as to its meaning. Mauchline (100) thinks it implies a negative answer - they have no father, why therefore "should Saul degrade himself by association with them?" McCarter (1980a:184), on the other hand, suggests that it should be understood as a reply to the earlier question in the sense "And who (but Saul himself) is their leader?" In 1 Sam 19:20 Samuel is reported as standing as head over a prophetic group.

/39/ Some scholars regard these verses as a disconnected traditional fragment (so, e.g., Birch, 1976:41). Ap-Thomas's suggestion (241-5) that dwd means (Philistine) "governor", and that this was an attempt by Saul to conceal his anointing from the enemy, fails to explain why the "governor" should be described as Saul's, and why the same word is not used in 10:5. Eslinger (1985:334-5) thinks this is the narrator's way of showing how Saul evades any questions that would disclose his secret anointing.

/40/ See 1 Sam 19:18ff for even closer parallels.

/41/ It is not clear what significance such close parallels may have for our understanding of the history of the traditions which now comprise Numbers 11 and the present section of 1 Samuel. It's likely, however, that they point to the involvement of the same (prophetic?) circles at some stage of that history. ✓

/42/ The limits of this pericope are not altogether clear. Although it is obvious that a new scene opens in 11:1 with the introduction of a new character, Nahash, and a new setting, Jabesh-gilead, and that chapter 12 consists mainly of a speech of Samuel, scholars have expressed uncertainty as to whether 10:25-27 and 11:12-15 form part of a literary unit with 11:1-11 or with the preceding and succeeding pericopes respectively (cf McCarter, 1980a:205). Miller (166) has argued that vv 12-14 be understood as integral elements of a unitary literary context. Whether or not this is so, vv 25b-27a clearly prepare for ch 11 (cf, e.g., R.W. Klein, 97, who describes them as a redactional tie): the dismissal of the people (10:25) permits their being called out for action in relief of Jabesh-gilead (11:7ff); while the negative comments of the "worthless fellows" (10:27) provide an opportunity for Saul to show magnanimity in 11:12-13.

[Several scholars depart from MT in 10:27b which they reconstruct on the basis of 4QSama (cf McCarter, 1980a:199; R.W. Klein, 103).]

/43/ McCarter (1980a:203-4) notes that the expression "most often refers to a kind of paralysing dread that disables the enemies of Israel". Here, however, "it comes upon the Israelites spurring them to battle and victory".

/44/ Hauer's suggestion (308) that the various traditions evident in these chapters "reflect the successive dimensions of Saul's dominion", with each of his three "coronations" having the effect of "extending his kingship into a new territory", is certainly intriguing but has been effectively criticised by Eppstein (290, n 2) partly because of the superficiality of the parallels cited.

/45/ Buber (1956:156) [quoted by Eslinger, 1985:378], thinks this is also witnessed to by the place given to Samuel in the narrative. He observes that Samuel's name has now appeared three times in connection with the word mlwkh (10:16, 25; 11:14). The kingdom that Yahweh establishes for Israel was secretly planned (10:16), perpetrated (10:25) but unaccepted (10:27-11:5), and finally accepted and supported by all (11:14f).

/46/ In addition to the parallels already mentioned, we might note the following points of contact:

- the enemy: the Ammonites are mentioned here as the oppressors/ aggressors as in the Jephthah narrative (where, as here, the Philistines are also oppressors); their intention to gouge out the eyes of the Jabesh-gileadites reminds us of the Philistines' treatment of Samson.

- the call: a prophetess was used to call Barak while Samuel the prophet plays his part here in the wider narrative; the elders play a role here in sending out the messengers as in the case of Jephthah; Gideon's call came when engrossed in the family agrarian pursuits; he also had a 'sign' (of fire) to confirm his call.

- the mustering of the tribes for battle: the tactic of the three-fold division of the troops in battle is also

mentioned in the Gideon narrative.

However, there are no obviously identical parallels, [although this is really true within the Judges' narratives themselves: it is, as we have seen, the Dtr framework - absent here - that gives these a similar pattern]. For a list of the affinities between this source and the Jephthah narrative complex in Jdg 10:17-12:7, see Blenkinsopp (1975:85-6).

/47/ Eslinger (1985:366) thinks that in this action Saul is symbolically signalling the end of his farming activities.

/48/ A good turn-out of the tribes in times of crisis was not easily achieved (cf Jdg 5:15-17).

/49/ As R.W. Klein points out (108), the separate totals for Israel and Judah seem anachronistic, presupposing the division of the monarchy after the death of Solomon. He further notes that many would doubt whether Saul exercised effective control over the area of Judah at any time.

/50/ Birch (1976:56ff) has identified the following formal elements of a holy war schema in vv 1-11: (i) identification of the situation and enemy (vv 1-4); (ii) possession of the spirit (v 6); (iii) mustering of the tribal levy (vv 7-8); (iv) account of victory and notice of complete annihilation (v 11).

/51/ In "Das Königscharisma bei Saul", ZAW 73:186-201 (1961). Beyerlin goes on to distinguish both these types of charisma from the royal charisma later possessed by Saul and his successors.

/52/ Humphreys (1982:104) and Blenkinsopp (1975:84) also note the tie with 10:7. [We might also compare the Samson narratives (p 97 above) where both private and public demonstrations of the spirit are given and where each fresh endowment with the spirit follows a fresh 'attack/approach' by the 'enemy'.

/53/ The parallels to the Judges' period [see note /46/ above] may tend to suggest that what we have here is just another example of what happened in the Period of the Judges. However, in context, there is a difference in that Saul becomes king not judge-deliverer (cf, e.g., Jobling, 1986b:57). Gordon (1984:48), however, wonders if the narrative is not deliberately structured to maximise the comparison between Saul and the deliverers of yesteryear, as a way of saying that, even when Israel has a king, deliverance may still come in the old way. He concludes that "in its present setting ch 11 ... may be heard to say that the old constitution was still sufficient for Israel's crises ... and might even carry the implication that the old pre-monarchical order was sufficient for Israel's crises".

/54/ There is some debate as to whether or not the present pericope was an original part of what has come to be known as "The History of David's Rise" (HDR). R.W. Klein (159) thinks not, since ch 17 and the rest of HDR take no direct cognizance of it. Similarly, McCarter (1980a:278) who regards it as a (prophetic) introduction to the HDR. Other scholars, however, view it as an original and organic part of the older complex [e.g, Weiser (1966:325-354), quoted in Gordon (1984:62)]. For recent discussion on 'David's Rise' see Lemche (2-25) and North (524-44).

/55/ The only occurrences of the root m⁹s in 1 Samuel are in 8:7; 10:19; 15:23,26 and 16:1,7. The use of the motif of rejection thus formally links Saul's fate with Yahweh's

understanding of his own treatment at the hands of the people (8:7; cf Hosea 4:6).

/56/ We might note also that Yahweh's elect one is to be anointed king (v 1) whereas Saul was anointed nagid (although nagid is used of David in 13:14).

/57/ On these words Gordon (1986:150) comments: "the king is Yahweh's choice, in contrast with Saul, who, though officially Yahweh's nominee (10:24) was appointed in response to public clamour (8:5, 22)".

/58/ His fear was quite plausible in that anointing a new king would be considered treasonous by Saul (cf 2 Kgs 9:3). Moreso, since the significance of the ritual, as Baldwin (121) points out, would have indicated only to Saul that a new king was being designated.

/59/ Beginning from v 6 the narrative makes extensive use of the verb "see" [cf also v 1 where "provided" = "see"]. Samuel saw Eliab and concluded that he was Yahweh's anointed, but it turned out he was not the one whom Yahweh had seen/ elected as his anointed.

/60/ Although Blenkinsopp (1975:76) has pointed out with reference to 10:20-24 that the lot was "employed elsewhere in the OT for the discovery of a guilty party".

/61/ Kessler (550) sees a contrast with Eliab and Saul (9:2; 10:23) here.

/62/ This metaphor for kingship was widespread in the ANE. Cf Walters (1988:574, n 17), who regards the shepherd/flock image "as a kind of leitmotif for David from this point on".

/63/ Though Preston (38) sees here a suggestion that the rise-fall pattern will be repeated in David.

/64/ An obligation which created a relationship that eventually came to be expressed as God's covenant with David.

/65/ Presumably this would help explain why other people in HDR were unaware of it. Even Eliab, his brother, seemed to be ignorant of David's anointing in 17:28. Gordon (1986:151) notes that the significance of the anointing, as far as the narrative is concerned, is known only to Samuel. Since more than kings were anointed in ancient Israel, the onlookers may or may not have drawn the appropriate conclusion. ?

/66/ Perhaps we are to understand his victory over the Philistine champion (ch 17) and his other military conquests (18:5-7; 19:8) as the fruit and public demonstration of this spirit endowment (so, Birch, 1976:62).

/67/ Humphreys (1982:108) attributes this to the vanishing of the distinctive prophetic perspective with the dropping of Samuel from view. On the other hand it may point to his superiority over Saul (compare Samson's need of four 'attacks' of the spirit compared with Othniel's one!).

/68/ Perhaps we are also meant to infer from this that the spirit did not leave his dynastic line either. Certainly, it is worth noting that no other king is described as receiving the spirit, though Neve (38-9) attributes this to the loss of the gift of the spirit: "as soon as the monarchy became a dynastic institution its successive rulers could no longer be charismatically designated. It had lost the gift of the spirit". The next time the spirit is connected with royalty is with respect to the coming 'ideal king', the "Messiah" (e.g. Is 11:2). ?

/69/ In the repeated use of "seen", reflecting v 1, there is surely at least a hint of the providential influence of Yahweh in the story at this point (much as in the story of Saul's journey to nagidship (9:6ff)).

/70/ McCarter (1980a:281) comments: "the attendant who speaks here hardly realises the importance of what he says, though his words adumbrate David's rise to power. Nor indeed does Samuel see the implications." Willis regards the whole of vv 14-23 as an "anticipatory redactional joint", while Gunn (1980:78), similarly thinks the passage is "in many respects ... the rest of the story in microcosm".

/71/ At this stage these words were hardly an apt description of David in view of Saul's denigration of David as "only a youth" in 17:33. This is but one instance of tension between chapters 16 and 17. A further aspect, the matter of David's arrival at court, is difficult to reconcile with certain aspects of the following narrative in ch 17, and especially with Saul's unfamiliarity with David prior to his encounter with Goliath. The most probable explanation lies not in strained arguments about Saul's mental state during previous meetings of the two, but in the compiler's use of traditional material, relating to David, which could be pressed into service to illustrate some of his leading themes concerning the rise to prominence of Jesse's son (so, Gordon, 1986:150). David's military prowess was shown later by his defeat of the Philistine (18:5-7 and 19:8).

/72/ Gordon (1986:152) notes that in v 19 Saul acts in the regal way outlined in Samuel's 'portrait of a king' (cf 8:11-18).

/73/ Moran (78-79) points out that the language of love can be found "used to describe the loyalty and friendship joining ... king and subject" in extrabiblical ancient Near Eastern texts from a wide span of time; and in the Amarna materials in particular the king of Egypt "is expected to love his vassal".

/74/ Gordon (1986:152) notes that Ps 51:11 may reflect a psalmist's fear of Saul-like dereliction.

/75/ Eichrodt (1967:55) points out that "the use of rwḥ in this sense is exactly paralleled in Babylonia where the good wind has as its counterpart the evil wind ... nevertheless the OT view is distinguished from that of paganism by the fact that the evil spiritual power is subordinated to the punishing God".

/76/ McCarter (1980a:280) comments, "the infusion of the spirit is never neutral. It may endow with special powers, or it may breed misery; and indeed the spirit now torments Saul".

/77/ This holds even though MT reads rwḥ 'lhym in v 23.

/78/ Von Rad (1968:124) notes how these texts show that "Yahwism had little difficulty in accepting even such obscure acts from the hand of Yahweh".

/79/ Lemche (21, n 17), however, considers it "rather difficult to give priority to either one or the other version of that assault if one has not first set up a chronological framework for all the various incidents in chs 18-20".

/80/ As with chapter 17 there are numerous differences between the MT and the text presupposed by LXXb. R.W. Klein (187) regards these as secondary pluses in MT but, as in ch

17, interprets them as part of the redaction of MT and not as part of an independent account. "The purpose of almost all the additions and alternate readings seems to be to heighten the hostility of Saul for David, or to magnify the virtues of David." Cf also Willis (313).

/81/ Compare 19:20-24 which would seem to view Saul's ecstatic behaviour quite negatively.

/82/ I am indebted to my supervisor, Mr Alastair G. Hunter for bringing this possibility to my attention.

/83/ We have already noted the alleged parallel with vv 9-10 in 18:10-11 (see p 140 above).

/84/ "Flight and escape were to be the facts of life for David while Saul lived, and the word 'fled' becomes a recurring motif in the subsequent narrative" (so, Baldwin, 132).

/85/ He comments, "because the only spirit he had was evil, Saul was unable to hit a sitting target".

/86/ McCarter (1980a:330) joins Wellhausen and many others in regarding vv 18-24 as a secondary insertion ... a late addition to the narrative in the spirit of the prophetic revision ... but of independent origin".

/87/ Quoted in R.W. Klein (194).

/88/ Many commentators have pointed out the structural resemblance to the account of Ahaziah's efforts to interview Elijah in 2 Kings 1:9ff.

/89/ Driver (ad loc) suggested that only the outer garment was removed. In biblical times nakedness was connected with shame. Note the surprise in Gen 2:25 in reporting that the couple in the garden was naked, but without shame (cf 2 Sam 10:4-5 and Mic 1:11).

/90/ LXX has 'before them' which is probably an attempt at harmonising with 15:35. Many commentators note the (seeming) contradiction between that verse and the present passage. Perhaps, in context, we are to interpret the "prophesying before Samuel" in the sense that Samuel never saw him in his right mind again/ it wasn't the Saul he anointed whom he saw that final time (?). It may, however, be that this is merely another instance where the disparate origin of the various stories in HDR leads to some inconsistencies among them.

/91/ David's escape here was due to the intervention of Yahweh himself, and not of Samuel, as R.W. Klein (199) seems to suggest. Each of the four escapes recorded in ch 19 was, of course, a manifestation of the fact that Yahweh was with David.

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ABBREVIATIONS

AB	Anchor Bible
AJSL	The American Journal of Semitic Languages and Literature
ANE	Ancient Near Eastern
ASTI	Annual of the Swedish Theological Institute
AV	Authorised Version
BDB	Brown, Driver and Briggs, <u>A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament</u> , Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1907.
BHS	<u>Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia</u>
Bib	Biblica
BZAW	Beihefte zur ZAW
CBC	Cambridge Bible Commentary
CBQ	Catholic Biblical Quarterly
DSB	The Daily Study Bible
DtrH	The Deuteronomistic History
FRLANT	Forschungen zur Religion und Literatur des A und NT
HDR	The History of David's Rise
IB	The Interpreter's Bible
Int	Interpretation
JBL	The Journal of Biblical Literature
JETS	Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society
JNES	Journal of Near Eastern Studies
JSOT	Journal for the Study of the Old Testament
JSOTS	JSOT Supplement Series
JTS	Journal of Theological Studies
LXX	The Septuagint
MT	The Massoretic Text
NBC	The New Clarendon Bible
NCB	New Century Bible
OTG	Old Testament Guides
OTL	Old Testament Library
OrAnt	Oriens Antiquus
RB	Revue Biblique
RSV	Revised Standard Version
Sam.	Samaritan Pentateuch
SB	Sources Bibliques
SBLDS	Society of Biblical Literature Dissertation Series.
T	Targum (Onkelos)
TB	Tyndale Bulletin
TBC	Torch Bible Commentaries
TI	Text and Interpretation
TOTC	Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries
V	Vulgate
VT	Vetus Testamentum
VTS	Supplements to VT
WBC	Word Biblical Commentary
WC	Westminster Commentaries
WMANT	Wissenschaftliche Monographien zum A und NT
ZAW	Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft ↙

